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Rough Time



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WIGTAG INTERVIEWS

JOE COCKER

Z One thing I don't think too many people know is that you used to lead a group called Vance Arnold and the Avengers, right?

J Very true - I shouldn't think anyone would know about that unless they lived in Sheffield. But we made a record with Decca, and they suggested that I drop the Vance Arnold bit and call myself Joe Cocker.

Z Who thought up the name Cocker?

J It's my real name. Anyway, we made this single of 'I'll Cry Instead', a Beatles tune, which didn't sell too well, and we recorded 'Georgia on my mind' too, but they didn't release it.

Z I read about that and there was reference to "the lavish orchestration done by a famous arranger on an ego-trip".

J Yes - It was Mike Leander, and he was. They spent a lot of money making the record, but you know what Decca are like. At that time they used to have a committee - I don't know if they still have it - that used to meet once a week to decide what were going to be their releases, and they just didn't think it would be a hit. So it's probably lying on a shelf there somewhere.

Z I suppose that your Decca days were before the formation of the Grease Band.

J Yes - It was Joe Cocker's Big Blues in those days, and we spent most of our time playing at American air bases around France, which was very good grounding work. But then when I got back to England, the whole thing was changing again. I'd always been hung up on soul music - as in Ray Charles and all the other people in the early stages of it - but it suddenly seemed to lose its whole purpose, to me anyway. People like Wilson Pickett, and all the clichés and so on just got me down, and I packed it up altogether for a year. But then I started another group thinking that if that's what they wanted, that's what we'll give them - and we were doing Tamla Motown stuff all round Sheffield. It was bound to go down well - they knew all the numbers and loved it. Then as soon as we got the record contract, we dropped all that and re-directed again.

Z How did you get the record contract? Did you simply send a tape of 'Marjorine' off to Denny Cordell?

J Well, I gave the tape to this DJ friend of mine in Chesterfield called Dave McPhee - I must look him up soon - and he took it to Tony Hall, who passed it on to Denny. As a result of that, Tony Hall has got 1% of me for life - very weird.

Z Why weren't the other members of the Grease Band - except Chris Stainton - on 'Marjorine'?

J Well, Denny came up to see us at Sheffield and watched us play at this pub, but when we talked about it, only me and Chris were interested in pursuing music full time. The others were all worried about packing up jobs and diving into it. They were pretty good musicians, but their mental attitude stopped them. So it was mainly session men on the record.

Z Then you formed a Grease Band which wasn't altogether successful didn't you?

J Yes, Tommy Eyre and Kenny Slade were too much into jazz, which wasn't the line Chris and I were after - so the whole thing wasn't working too well.

Z Would you say then, that 'Don't let me be misunderstood', which is the only track you made with that Grease Band, was ill-conceived and not what you were after?

J No, strangely enough I really like that - I can listen to it. And Tommy did the organ intro to 'With a little help from my friends' which was great - I'm not saying he wasn't a good musician, but for what we wanted to do in the band, it was just ridiculous.

Z And is that why he and Kenny weren't featured very much on the first LP?

J Yes - Kenny was definitely a jazz rooted drummer and just couldn't get the heavy feel we wanted. I've seen him lately, and he's just the same.

Z Who actually arranged 'With a little help from my friends' and how did that famous scream come about?



J Well, we'd just done 'Bye Bye Blackbird' and I was stuck on this waltz kick at the time, and I was sitting thinking that 'With a little help' might sound good in 3/4 with an answer thing in it. But I don't play any instruments, so I had a word with Chris, - and he picks things up very fast - and that's how it started. But everybody on the session contributed - like Jimmy Page invented that guitar intro, Tommy did that organ bit, Chris has some lovely bass - really low notes from this old Fender that he had stolen from him. The scream came out during a rehearsal, and Chris reckoned it was good and should be left in. I never knew what I'd taken on when I did that.

Z That first LP took almost a year to make didn't it?

J Yes.

Z And some tracks - like 'I shall be released' were done in lots of different ways before you were satisfied?

J Yes - we tried that number at lots of different sessions ... we had Al Kooper and Aynsley Dunbar on some of them. But we just went on until we knew each take was right. Denny, who produced it, is an incredibly fussy guy, and he taught us how to be fussy. Like, when we first got there we thought "Oh first take - we'll not do better than that". But Denny Cordell is into producing real master records ... I know it sounds a bit off to talk like this, but a good record is like a painting. That's why the Beatles records stand out - everything they put in matters ... not a note is wasted.

Z So the latest Grease Band, as on the new LP, is working out much better now?

J Well, it's not a question of being better - it's a question of having the tools to work with on stage for the first time - and going around America has really got the band together.

Z Who picks the songs that you do on the albums, because they're a really good choice - all classics. For instance, how did you come to record, say, 'Lawdy Miss Clawdy' and 'Darling be home soon'?

J It's good of you to say that, because in England our albums just don't sell well at all. There are a stack of smaller bands who sell much better than us. I suppose it's partly because we worked mainly in America. With 'Lawdy Miss Clawdy' - that happened when Chris and I were just messing around in the studio. I started singing it and he played it on piano, and we just got onto that weird time feel on it. 'Darling be home soon' I've wanted to record since it first came out and this was the first chance I've had. But it's got to the stage now where we've got to write our own songs, because there aren't many other suitable ones left that excite me enough. The Beatles songs are great and easy to shift about, but I can't go on doing Beatles numbers all the time.

Z Let's talk about your second album, which was done in America, with Leon Russell (next superstar) co-producing. How did that come about?

J That was weird. Just before we left for our first tour of America, someone sent me the Delaney and Bonnie record through the post. And we all flipped over the piano playing on 'The Ghetto' which was Leon. Then when we got to LA he came to a couple

of sessions, and he played me Delta Lady, which again knocked us all out. His playing is incredible - Chris says he never makes a mistake - and his album is going to be really good ... he's got a unique voice, really unique.

Z What about the other guests on your LP? Like Clarence White from the Byrds, and Sneaky Pete from the Burritos ... how did they get in there?

J Well, I saw the Burritos in LA, and we were playing with the Byrds in San Francisco, and they just came along to the session. I don't know if you've seen Clarence White, but on his second string he's got something attached to his shoulder strap so that when he tilts it, it bends the note sort of like a Hawaiian guitar ... and he's really developed this technique - it's unbelievable. But when he came to do 'Dear Landlord', which is the track he played on, he was very nervous and never quite settled down to give the performance we thought he could. It was an overdub, his part - so maybe if he'd done it live with us, it would have been all right. Sneaky Pete played live. He wanted to join the band - he reckoned he could do all sorts with that steel guitar, get trumpet sounds and everything - but for some reason we never got round to talking about him joining.

Z Have you got any numbers in mind for your next album?

J Well we've got until March to get some together and Chris and I are working on them now. But we may do 'The Letter' - the old Box Tops song.

Z It seems to me that you're up against a sort of barrier in England. You reach a head audience in America, but you don't here - do you feel that?

J Yes. I try to get through to everybody really, but I do have difficulty here - whether I can't tune in or not, I don't know. But I think people go for the hype rather than their own ears.

Z I think that's where your record label is hanging you up - there's been hardly any advertising for your new album.

J Maybe the heads are put off because they know that I'm from Sheffield and that I was a gas fitter - I don't know. In America we sold 200,000 of the first LP and, so far, a quarter of a million of this one ... but in England, we only did 6,000 on the first and it's up to 5,000 on the new one.

Z I suppose it's vastly different playing in front of an American audience and an English one. I mean, the Airplane and the Dead play these three hour numbers and everyone digs it ...

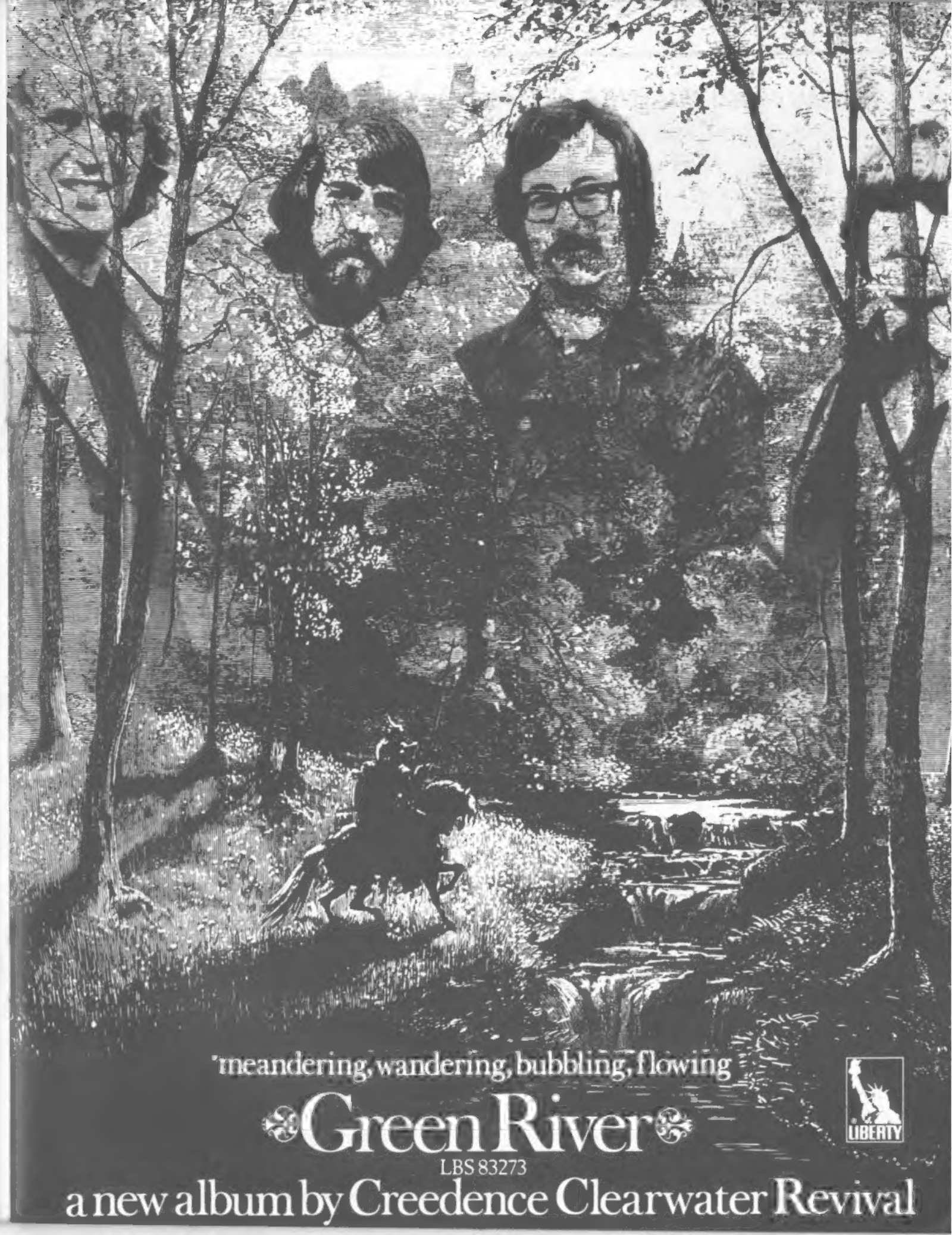
J Yes - those groups have got an amazing rapport over there, and a lot of it is acid music. The kids all come and talk acid, the group does, and when they get into a nice feel, they just keep it rolling. We played at a festival in Atlanta and I think that practically the whole of the 70,000 audience was on acid.

Z Can't see that happening here for a while.

J Right ... it's a whole different thing over there.

Z Anything else you want to say?

J I can never think of anything I want to say ... peace.



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● Bass players often seem to write very good songs, for instance Jack Bruce and Paul McCartney. I was asked to hear some songs by the Soft Machine's ex bass player Kevin Ayers. I thought the songs were very good so I took them along to Harvest who liked them as well. Kevin then got together with David Bedford, one of England's leading young classical composers and (with his friends) made a record called 'Joy of a Toy' which cost a bomb, but both myself and the people at Harvest think that this is a great record and hope that you will listen to it. ●

Peter Jenner/Blackhill

KEVIN AYERS - JOY OF A TOY - HARVEST SHVL 763



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"Pete Brown here —
and also on Harvest records.
"A meal you can shake hands with in the dark"
(Harvest SHVL 752) is still around, of course,
but look out for* "Things may come and things
may go but the Art School Dance goes on
for ever" (Harvest SHVL 768)
AMEN

* the new album coming soon



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BUDDY HOLLY



This article is by Malcolm Jones, Label Manager of Harvest Records, who also supplied the rare photos. The first is Holly in his pre-Crickets days, the second was taken during his early days with Brunswick/Coral (late 1957), and the third is a Decca publicity picture taken about a month before his death (i.e., around January 1959). The letters in brackets refer to the discography which follows the article.

With Gene Vincent signing to Dandelion, Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash high in the U.S. album charts (and here in the case of the latter), with Chuck Berry appearing recently with the Who at the Albert Hall, Presley still firmly entrenched in the top ten, and with Carl Perkins and Little Richard doing very nicely thank you, it would be interesting to look at someone who perhaps isn't currently in favour, but rather has been selling records consistently in big numbers ever since he died in 1959. That is Buddy Holly of course.

Contrary to popular belief, Holly didn't have a meteoric rise to fame with his first release. It took four years of hard grind before "That'll Be the Day" topped the American Top Ten in September 1957, and that's a long time. His career can be divided into four distinct parts, his country and western phase, his early rock and roll efforts, the era of the Crickets and his later transformation into a pop singer.

Like most young kids, Holly was greatly influenced by the pop music of his time, and no young Texan teenager in the early fifties with an interest in music was unaffected by hillbilly. Hank Williams in particular was at his most popular (he, ironically, died at the peak of his career too in 1953) and so it was natural that Holly should start picking country tunes on his recently acquired guitar. He soon became one of the best guitarists in his area, and by the next year (1954) he had teamed up with school friend Bob Montgomery, and together the two were playing gigs in and around Lubbock, their home town. With the aid of a series of radio programmes on KDAV they became very much in demand at parties and local dances. The recordings they made at the time (a) at the Nesman studios in Wichita Falls were pure hillbilly. At this early stage in his career, Holly played second fiddle (metaphorically speaking only!) to Montgomery, singing the harmonies and concentrating on the guitar solos. His break on "Got To Get Me Near You Blues" (a) is probably one of his all-time bests. As yet, Holly hadn't really started composing either, relying for the material on Montgomery. But things were soon to change.

The advent of rock and roll brought Holly to the second stage in his career. Again he was pretty much the same as any 18 year old American teenager, and idolised Presley who was in the early stages of his career, but was nevertheless starting to pull in the crowds wherever he appeared. He was

still with Sun and was not the name he was soon to become, but he was sufficiently well known to head a small package tour that eventually reached North West Texas, and Lubbock, in late 1955. Strange as it may seem, the show was promoted as a country and not a rock one - Marty Robbins was one of the attractions - and Holly and Montgomery were naturally selected to perform as they were the main local talent at the time. The result was an offer from Jim Denny, a talent scout with connections with both the Grand Ole Opry show and with Decca records to record in Nashville. To the dismay of both, however, Montgomery was not included in the offer, for Denny wanted Holly to sing rock, not country (by this time they had started singing some of Holly's rock compositions), and so, not wanting to jeopardise Holly's chances, Montgomery dropped out. Meanwhile, Holly entered the second era of his career.

Getting a band together was no problem at all. Holly was very well known in the South West (he had toured earlier with Hank Snow) and after selecting the best musicians in the area he left for Nashville. But any dreams of instant stardom that they might have had were soon to be dashed.

For Decca had different ideas. On many of the 16 or so titles he made for them (b&c) he wasn't allowed to use his own band (Sonny Curtis on guitar, Jerry Allison on drums and Don Guess on bass), and instead he was accompanied by session musicians and told what to sing. Of all the titles he made, the ones that Holly really comes through on are those with his own band, the Three Tunes. "Rock Around With Ollie Vee"(b) must be one of the heaviest rock and roll records ever made, and heard on headphones (in wonderful mono!) on the threshold of pain, it's pretty stunning. With Sonny Curtis on guitar (the first rock guitarist to really bend notes) and side-kick Jerry Allison on drums (ignore the rim-shots - they're by one of the session drummers) it makes the insipid musicians on "Modern Don Juan" sound like a palm court orchestra. Similarly, "Ting-A-Ling"(b), one of the only two tracks on the album on which Holly takes his own solo (the other is "That'll Be The Day") is heavier than any other rock disc made at that time. Holly really wraps his tonsils around the mike while Allison stomps away in the not-too-distant background. For straightforward unoriginal rock and roll these two tracks are unbeatable, but on many of the other tracks done at Decca in January 1956, the group were all too often replaced by session men with instructions to emulate Presley/Haley type rim-shots and guitar tones. Compare, for example, Presley's "Money Honey" (particularly the guitar break) with Holly's "Midnight Shift"(b), or "I'm Left, Your Right, She's Gone" with "Blue Days, Black Nights". They could have been done at the same session.

Holly obviously wasn't happy with what was happening, and became even more despondent when the single released failed to move. They tried again later with two more titles, but again, nothing. When Decca declined to renew his contract, Holly formed a new group, changed the name from the Three Tunes to the more modern-sounding 'Crickets' (this influenced the Beatles to try for a name with a built-in pun), and went to see Norman Petty. Holly had entered the third and most successful phase of his career.

Petty was already quite a name in the record world. He had written a million seller for pianist

Roger Williams, and had his own trio specialising in music for grandmothers - hardly the man, you would think, to make rock records. But yes. He had already had success with Buddy Knox and Jimmy Bowen (Knox now records under Bob Montgomery while Bowen produces Sinatra records!), so he was obviously the man to see, especially as he was just over the border from Lubbock in Clovis, New Mexico. Petty, one of the first independent producers in the States, liked what he heard and re-made "That'll Be The Day", selling it to Bob Thiele at Coral records, ironically a subsidiary of the company that had just terminated Holly's contract. Petty, a shrewd business man as well as a musician, made sure that his name was on the composer line when the record was issued in the middle of 1957, when all that he did was to clean up the group's sound and make them a little more distinctive. But now, and more important, the recording set-up was different. Holly was allowed greater freedom to record what he wanted.

For Petty had negotiated two contracts - one for the Crickets (with Holly as leader) on Brunswick, and one for Holly as a solo (backed by the Crickets) on Coral. Even at this early stage he foresaw a solo career for Holly, and after "That'll Be The Day" hit, released "Words of Love" as his debut solo record. It didn't make it. No-one really knew who Holly was, and it was a little out of character for 1957 (it still sounded modern when the Beatles recorded it 7 years later), and they had to wait a little while before "Peggy Sue" stormed up the charts. But "Words of Love" was a wise move. For Petty saw in Holly an artist/composer with a greater future than that of any ordinary rock and roller, and "Words of Love", a far cry from "That'll Be The Day" and "Oh Boy!" that was soon to come was the first of a series of recordings that seem to have been more Petty's cup of tea than the usual rock material that the group seemed to prefer. Strangely, Holly wrote most of this material, but on stage rarely sang it. He preferred songs like "Rip It Up", "Be-Bop-A-Lula" and "Ready Teddy". It took Petty to see Holly's potential as a songwriter and not as a rock and roller.

It would have been easy for Petty if he had been a "get-rich-quick" merchant to have told his group to record nothing but rock titles. After all, that was what was selling. But despite the gap, age and taste-wise, between Petty and the Crickets, he was surprisingly adept at handling them. Instead of treating them as a simple means of making himself rich - common practice at that time - he treated his group with the humanity and respect that they deserved. They were allowed to record their own songs, albeit many of them composed with Petty's collaboration, and they were guided rather than forced into making the right decisions as far as releases were concerned. The two albums made around this time (d&e) seem to be compromises between the taste of the group and that of Petty. Holly's solo album in particular contains a mixture of songs of Petty's preference ("Listen to Me", "Look at Me", "Everyday") and others chosen by Holly and the group ("Ready Teddy" and "Rave On"). Although Petty part wrote this latter title, it was originally intended by Bill Tilghman and Sunny West to be a country song, and it was only when Holly asked Petty to update it that it was seen as a potential song for Holly to record.

In the case of the Crickets, Petty in no way manufactured or fabricated the sound or style.



He was, you could say, an early Mickie Most. His main talent was an ability to spot what was his potential in either a song or in a performer, and a facility to mould that potential into a saleable commodity. He cleaned up the Crickets both visually, by buying them smart Italian-styled suits (as Brian Epstein did with his group), and sound-wise, by knocking off the rough edges. In order to fill out the sound on the re-make of "That'll Be The Day", for example, he brought in a couple of extra vocalists to join in on the harmonies. But even without them, the Crickets sounded, on live dates, virtually the same as on record. In fact, "Oh Boy!" was recorded, not in Petty's studio but in the Officers' Club in Oklahoma City, although the backing voices and echo were added later in Clovis. So what you hear on the disc is what they really sounded like.

As far as Holly's sound and style are concerned, though, it was rather different. Petty recorded the Crickets rough and raw. He let the inexhaustible Allison drum away to his heart's content, and the nearest they got to manufacturing a sound was the voice overdubbing with groups like the Roses or the Picks. With Holly's solo efforts, however, Petty made use of his considerable engineering and musical ability. He double-tracked Holly's voice on "Words of Love", "Listen to Me" and "I'm Gonna Love You Too". So Holly could sing in harmony with himself. He tamed Allison and gave him a jelly to play on "Everyday". He even played piano on some tracks ("Look at Me") and for "Everyday" they used a celeste! It seems that Petty was in his element with solo Holly, whereas with the Crickets he was just doing his job. This would explain why he put Holly as a solo on

Coral and the Crickets as a group on Brunswick, even though there was exactly the same set of people on both sets of recordings! This, the third era of Holly's musical life was his finest hour. In Britain he had six hits in a row between September 1957 and August 1958, and at one time he and the Crickets had four singles in the top 20 at the same time.

Towards the end of 1958, Holly even took second place to another lead guitarist, Tommy Allsup, and while Holly strummed his Gibson jumbo and sang, the new boy filled in and took the solos. This happened, for example, on "Heartbeat", "It's So Easy", "Lonesome Tears" and "Wishing". Similar, you might say, to the days with Decca. Hardly. For now, instead of the big man behind the controls saying he couldn't take his own solos, he was made to see the sense of concentrating on singing and on leaving the guitar to someone else. Sure, he could have overdubbed them at a later stage as he had done previously, but what was the point? Petty saw Holly as a singer/composer, not as a guitarist, so why not let a better one take over? Similarly, Petty can also claim responsibility for bringing out in Holly the characteristics and mannerisms that became his trade marks - the hiccoughs ("Peggy Sue") the strange pronunciations (e.g. the word 'baby') and the child-like voice as in "Peggy Sue", "Everyday" and "Heartbeat".

In the latter half of 1958 Holly, pleased with the success that was coming his way under Petty's guidance, agreed to cover both sides of Bobby Darin's "Early In The Morning". Recorded in New York without the Crickets (they had parted company, although Holly later formed the new Crickets and recorded "It's So Easy"), it had a strong gospel influence and was the first Holly hit to have come from the pen of someone outside the Holly fraternity.

Soon, however, The Petty influence on



Holly's recordings was to take its toll, for "Heartbeat", his next solo offering, (written by Petty and Montgomery), failed to get higher than 29 in England, in November 1958. In a way, it was his most adventurous disc since "Words of Love", a year earlier. Unlike the previous hits, both with and without the Crickets, it had a latin-American tempo and was completely undanceable, which was for 1958 a capital offence. So people ignored the disc and bought records such as "Splish Splash", "Rebel Rouser", "Yakety Yak" and "Hard Headed Woman" instead.

Undeterred by the failure of "Heartbeat", it was decided to try another gamble. This was to release a couple of tracks cut three months earlier in New York with a full orchestra including, for the first time in the history of rock and roll, violins. Petty had wanted to do this for some time, but Holly had resisted. Eventually, he yielded, and the result "It doesn't matter anymore" was his biggest and fastest-selling hit since "That'll Be The Day". Ironically, he never lived to even see it enter the charts, let alone top the British charts for six weeks, for he was killed on February 3rd 1959 when his chartered plane piled into a fence in a corn field near Mason City, Iowa.

The relationship between Holly and Petty seems similar to that which exists between the Beatles and George Martin. The basic talent was Holly's, but it took someone with Petty's ability to spot and bring it out. Had Holly been in the hands of someone with less patience and understanding, his success story might have been very much different. Listen to those early Decca cuts. Sure, they're fine rock and roll, but totally unoriginal. It was only during his 18 months with Petty that Buddy Holly developed the style later to be known as the Tex-Mex sound. It has often been said that the Holly sound of the fifties became the British sound of the sixties.

Holly's era has passed now. The copyists are all washed up or have jumped on some other bandwagon. But Holly's music still has a bearing on current musical styles. There is a remarkably close similarity between Holly's Tex-Mex sound and that of the bands who, like the Crickets, have their roots in country music. (Creedence Clearwater, the Byrds, the Dillards and the Band). When Stevie Winwood sings Holly's "Well ... Alright" he sings it with Holly's mannerisms. And compare "Here Comes the Sun" from "Abbey Road" with "Words of Love" or "Listen to Me".

Holly scored with a dazzling series of firsts in an era when everyone followed the flock. He was one of the first white rock stars to rely almost exclusively on his own material. The Crickets were probably the first white group to feature the lead/rhythm/bass/drums line up. He was the first rock singer to double track his voice and guitar. He was the first to use strings on a rock'n'roll record. In addition, he popularised the Fender Stratocaster and was probably the only rock star to wear glasses on stage!

The chances are that if he were alive now, Holly would still be way ahead of everybody else. Instead of having to wait until his kind of music came back into popularity (like Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash are riding on the revived C&W wave) he'd probably be way ahead setting the style to be emulated by the rest. After all, he always was.

Below is a complete listing of Buddy Holly/Cricket albums. The original versions of these on Coral have now been deleted, but all have been re-issued by MCA with different sleeves. The list gives both the original title and the new one. I won't give any preferences save to say that anyone wanting a comprehensive collection of Holly's hits should buy (j), which at less than a pound is a must for everybody.

- (a) HOLLY IN THE HILLS (Coral LVA 9227). Re-issued as WISHING on MCA MUPS 320. All, with the exception of 'Wishing' and 'Baby lets play house', made with Bob Montgomery. For those who like C & W, or Holly fanatics only.
- (b) THAT'LL BE THE DAY (Ace of Hearts AH 3). Recorded in early 1956 in Nashville, under Jim Denny. Raw, earthy Holly.
- (c) REMINISCING (Coral LVA 9212). Re-issued by MCA as BROWN EYED HANDSOME MAN (MUPS 314). Contains 5 cuts from the Decca sessions that were never used on (b). The remainder are a mixture of demos with over-dubbed backings or studio items made in 1958. A good Holly rock album.
- (d) THE CHIRPING CRICKETS (Coral LVA 9081). Recently re-issued as Coral CP 20 at 19/11. Contains 'Oh Boy!', 'That'll be the day', and 'Maybe Baby' plus their b-sides and 6 other titles. Recorded under Norman Petty. A bargain.
- (e) BUDDY HOLLY (Coral LVA 9085). Re-issued as LISTEN TO ME (MUPS 312). Holly's 1st solo album. Worth trying to get the original for the incredible cover which makes him look like a concert pianist. Excellent.
- (f) THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY (Coral LVA 9105). Re-issued as RAVE ON on MCA. All his and the Crickets' hits.
- (g) THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY VOL 2 (Coral LVA 9127). Re-issued as TRUE LOVE WAYS on MCA MUPS 319. 6 tracks are demos with backings added, not by Petty, but by Coral in New York. 3 of them were posthumous hits. Rest are the remainder of the orchestra session and a couple of earlier b-sides. Good, despite the mixture.
- (h) BUDDY HOLLY SHOWCASE (Coral LVA 9222). Re-issued as MCA 315. Strange mixture of very early rock (poor quality recordings), overdubbed demos (fine) and studio masters made in late 1958, including one title ('Come back baby') co-written by Petty and a young Fred Neil.
- (i) GIANT (MCA 371). The most recent. Never issued on Coral. Similar to (h). Fanatics only.
- (j) THE BEST OF BUDDY HOLLY Originally issued on Ace of Hearts at about 25/-, now just re-issued on Coral at 19/11. Contains all his and Crickets' hits and should be owned by anyone who got to the end of this article! Virtually the same as (f) but half the price and sleeved in a better cover.
- (k) BUDDY HOLLY SONGBOOK by Tommy Allsup and produced by Petty. Instrumental recreations of old hits, folks! On some of the tracks (eg 'It's so easy'), it sounds like the original in parts. Now deleted. London-American HAU 8218.

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PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC



"Five more different and divergent personalities could not be conceived of—a Jew, a Christian, a Black, a Greaser and a WASP. What we have learned about one another in the year and a half that we have been together as the PG&E is: no matter how different we are in philosophies and life styles, the common denominator between us is the music."



PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC
No. (S) 63822

Spirit



PETE SENOFF

To the musical purist, enthralled in one of the several prominent genres of music (rock, blues, jazz, country-western, etc.), fusions among these different elements would be unacceptable... unthinkable... tantamount in some quarters to "selling out."

Luckily, however, the dedicated purist is finding his numbers ever diminishing. Witness the pseudo-acceptance of a group like the Byrds to the Grand Ole Opry or the newfound resurgence of jazzman Roland Kirk to the rock idiom (through some gentle prodding on the part of Jimi Hendrix). And, conversely to the last example, witness the interest shown in jazz circles to some of the newer jazz-rock groups. Ten Years After, for example, have engaged in some remarkable jams with Woody Herman's group and they were the first group to be invited to this year's Newport (Rhode Island) Jazz Festival. Jethro Tull is another illustration.

But for all the groups who are outwardly attempting... announcing... that they're going to bridge the gap between musical idioms (say jazz and rock), there is one group, Spirit, who haven't felt it necessary to announce or declare anything in reference to what they've set out to do. They've let their music speak for itself... the various music critics

and writers have taken it from there. But Spirit has some definite ideas on the subject; for that matter, on music in general. I spoke with guitarist Randy California and drummer Ed Cassidy.

P.S. Right before the Newport Jazz-Rock fiasco, there was a jazz festival in Virginia that had only one rock act on the bill. Yet that act, Sly & The Family Stone, completely ran off with the show. And to an audience of primarily jazz people. What's your reaction?

RANDY: Because they probably gave more of themselves, through their music. It's that simple. Now you can't start saying that jazz is bad and pop is good... better. It's just that that particular group gave more of themselves. I'm sure: If Wes Montgomery was still alive, he would have got the same ovation.

ED: Yeah, it's pretty obvious that jazz, as an art form, is pretty dead. I mean, if you go to a jazz club and watch them... look at them. What do those musicians do for you? Except for making you want to go home.

P.S. Then jazz should be more visual?

ED: Jazz should be more people, man... more folk. It's not comfortable. There's just this instrument hooked up to a speaker... there's really no quality that's coming out. Oh, there's a little hate and a little resentment be-

cause the world is treating you like a dirty rat and it all means something, because jazz is so steeped in tradition. But there's that lack of being simple folk... lack of enjoyment, I think one sentence boils the whole jazz thing down: Jazz is not well liked. It might be appreciated and understood, but it's not very well liked. If people listen to it uptight, it makes them uptight and becomes a back and forth thing.

RANDY: It's like any other kind of medium. Like ten years ago, jazz was something to get into... to break away and be different. People broke into that and they just stayed there. And now rock is the thing to be different... well, not really anymore. The thing to be different now is to be playing good music. To really pulsate. That guitar-dominated era is over.

P.S. It really didn't last very long, did it?

RANDY: Well, it lasted as long because there's a Midwest and there's a this and a that and it takes time to reach everybody. But now I think it's reached everybody... everywhere.

P.S. What about the many attempts to fuse rock and jazz together. Blood, Sweat And Tears... Larry Coryell... Gary Burton. Are they succeeding?

RANDY: I don't think so... because they are attempts. They're conscious attempts to do it. We're not making any kind of conscious

effort. That's what naturally happened with us. When people are trying to do something... really trying, it's hard to do it.

ED: Sure, when we formed, I wanted to bridge the gap between the various musics... but I wasn't trying to make it a jazz group or Randy was not trying to make it a rock or blues group and Jay (Ferguson) wasn't trying to make it a classical group. Even though people will say, you know, because we're reacting to the jazz thing now... they'll say we've got a jazz background and we're trying to be a jazz group. So with that, people will put labels to things. But there's no way you can deny that. So what we do is we don't consciously... and that's where I think a lot of groups run into problems... they consciously try to do a certain thing and in the process, get trapped.

Probably the closed thing that Spirit does to outright jazz is the closing number of their sets. An instrumental called Elijah (A somewhat shorter version is on their first album). It's a showcase number, eliciting solos from each member of the group.

According to Cassidy, "Well, the way it evolves is... We use a basic head, which is in 3/4 time. When we first started out, we all used to take solos more in the jazz sense, because we all used to take solos basically in 3/4... coming off the head and staying in time. Now we just do anything we want."

That last comment is some sort of an understatement. Some

people, who've seen the group perform 2 or 3 times, have commented that the number sounds the same on each hearing. But then, when they see them a fourth time, there's a definite difference...perhaps musically, perhaps visually.

"The song was written with the precise thought in mind to give each person solo time to express himself in any way he chooses," Cassidy commented. "Not as much freedom as they would want, but...every time we play ing whatever we feel musically concerned about at any particular gig...whether or not it's the first or the 500-and-first time we've done it. The song was written to be a challenge to us musically and it always is to us. And our expressions...solos if you will...aren't just musical. For my solo, I might hand out 500 apples to the audience, which we've done. Randy might throw out bags of candy, which he's done for his solo. Now you may say it's not musical, but you're forgetting the point of the song. It's a point of departure for our individual expressions."

In the context of present-day musicology, "Elijah" might be designated as a jam. But that word, itself, with thoughts of 30 minute record sides devoted to the Iron Butterfly or Steppenwolf, is starting to leave a bitter taste in the mouths of musicians.

ED: Don't you think that kind of thing has been vomited-up enough? With people jamming on these super sessions and all. The whole trip has become a shuck. Recording 15 or 21 minutes of pure junk.

RANDY: People want to be entertained and we want to be entertained...especially by our own music. We like to cut something in the studio and then hear it back and make changes we think are necessary to make it sound the way we think it should sound. But jamming? You can hear anybody jam. The idea is not really that special anymore. And actually, most of our music originates from jams. And we do jamming parts within our songs.

ED: The things which we do in our live sets are things which we've also recorded, but on stage we have the freedom to add whatever we want. So that makes it possible for us to enjoy the songs we're playing all the time.

RANDY: You've got to keep some basic structure in the material you're doing. It's vital.

Improvisation on another plane is dominant in Spirit's repertoire —Randy California's diverse usage of such electronic sound-makers as fuzz-tone, wah-wah, feedback, and tape-loop echo. At first hearing that he's only 18

years old (he's been playing professionally since 14). It might seem somewhat strange that California has picked up all that he does at such a young age. Thanks might properly be extended to one of his early musical comrades for that...a guy named Hendrix.

Said California: "I met him at a music store in New York. I was about 15 then. He was looking to buy an amplifier and I was looking for a guitar. He had the guitar in his hands and I asked him how much he wanted for it. He said \$40, but I didn't have the money at the time. But he told me his name. Then I didn't see him for about four months...until I ran into him in the Village, at a place called the Cafe Wha? And that was the first time he was going to be on stage himself, as a solo. He had always been a backup guy behind groups. He played one set...and the people really dug him. After the set, I went backstage into the cellar and started playing some things with him. And then he said I was the person he was looking for because he wanted a second guitar player...but not just a rhythm guitar player. He wanted someone to play leads with him and...But I couldn't stay."

"But Hendrix was the one that taught me how to bend notes. When I got back to L.A., I just was barely getting into electric guitar. After the group was to-

gether for about 6 months, I added a fuzz-tone, wah-wah, and the tape loop I use now. And now the group is considering getting a synthesizer."

PS: How would a synthesizer fit into what you're doing as a group?

RANDY: See, we're not going to try to fit it into what we're doing; we're going to try to create something with it. Electronic music is another media and we're going to try to use it as a tool to it's fullest extent. If there's any instrument that has a different sound, we want to have that sound within our reach, so if we want it, we can use it. ED: That's the freedom about this group. We might all decide tomorrow that we're all going to play trumpets from now on...there's not going to be any drums, guitar, bass, or piano. It's all going to be voice and trumpets...nothing else. But that's the whole idea. We're doing what we're doing...however we're going to do it from one moment to the next. It might be totally alien to what you've heard us do before, but that's where we're going. We're not restricted by YOUR restrictions. You restrict yourself by trying to restrict us to play a certain way that you're used to hearing.

Los Angeles Free Press

JODY GRIND

Part 2 Split and reformation

Part 1 of this article, printed last month, concerned the original Jody Grind. This month Tim Hinkley, Bernie Holland and Pete Gavin talk about the re-formed group.

TIM HINKLEY (Organist and singer)

The original band started off at the beginning of 1969, and it was going in a certain direction — the same direction. But, after a while, it became apparent that our tastes and ideas were gradually diverging. It's difficult — we've all been playing as professionals for between 8 and 10 years, and it gets to the point when the music is a very personal thing, and it becomes more and more difficult to find people whose sympathies are with you and who can play with you. As well as that, when you play with people you've known for a long time, the friendship side tends to make you disregard the musical incompatibilities as they develop. And when it does become obvious that you feel unable to play together any longer, and someone states the facts, the personal relationship is completely destroyed. So after that, it becomes impossible to stay together; things start to get tangled, improvisations lose their balance, and musical and personal discord can't be disguised or hidden.

This happened with us — there was disagreement in the musical policy — and so we decided to split, as a result of which, Ivan Zagni and Barry Wilson have now left the band, and, rather than say I've found replacements, I've reformed Jody Grind.

The old Jody Grind had a period of experimenting with free form music — about 6 months ago — and I'm taking a step back, just to re-assess things. The policy will evolve with the group; as it matures, the ideas will, I hope, flow out.... but, for the most part, our repertoire will be new. I want the band to become tighter, and the arrangements to be more stated; in other words, I want the themes which we improvise over to be a lot more complicated and intricate.... and I want another voice to augment mine. In the old band I was playing organ, the bass part on organ, and singing, and I often felt the need for a second voice. The numbers will be as hard, but sweeter, and the sets will be longer.... ideally, I'd like the band to be able to keep people happy for 2 hours.

We'll be going into the studio at the end of January, but whether or not we'll be ready to record an LP, I don't

know. The studio's been booked, but sometimes numbers need to be worked in and played live, rather than just privately rehearsed. I tend to think that the first sessions will be purely experimental, but there will be an album ready this Spring anyway.

BERNIE HOLLAND (Guitarist and singer)

I did a lot of semi-professional work around Cheltenham before I came to London to join Long John Baldrey's old Bluesology group. After that I worked with the Paper Dolls, Jerome Arnold's Blues Band, which didn't happen — mainly because we were just doing stereotyped blues numbers, and then I was with The Ferris Wheel for 4 months. I dug being with them in some ways, but it was too orientated towards the pop scene.... I dig pop and won't put it down, but it was just mixed into the cogs of the pop system. The group was being ground around by the agencies and so on and was never really getting anywhere.

At school I studied music and the Spanish guitar. Consequently, I got used to playing without a pick, and I still fingerpick the electric guitar — sort of like some of the Byrds stuff and Robbie Kreiger of the Doors. So Jody Grind will sound somewhat different.

As well as working to rehearse our material, I've been involved with Ian Garr, who's just broken up his long association with Don Rendell. Through him I've been introduced to a lot of out and out jazz musicians, but their attitude towards pop is one of total acceptance, which is more than you can say for the attitudes on this side, which are usually very acrid. Ian's been writing some actual rock numbers for his new band to play...he's got Jeff Clyne on bass, Brian Smith on tenor, Carl Jenkins on electric piano, Johnny Marshall on drums, himself on trumpet, and me on guitar. It's been a sort of compromise, with everybody listening to each other and working together, and that's how I feel about group work. It's just a question of musical discipline, and if you learn that early, it can feed you into other things more readily. I mean, a band must be into what it's doing with conviction.... it's no good saying "Yeah, let's

slouch on stage, play with our eyes closed, look stoned...." and so on, you've really got to get up there and blow their minds, and make them feel like you do.... which is what Jody Grind is going to do.

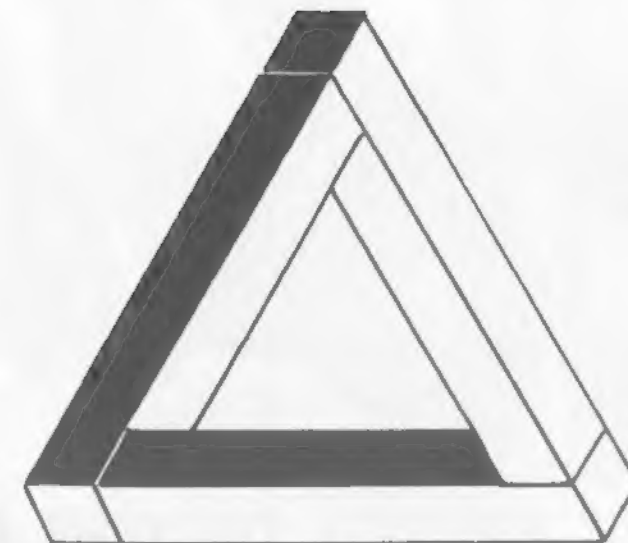
The new Jody Grind logo (see above) is a multi-dimensional triangle — paradoxical as regards perspective. But we're going to use it as our symbol — on the record label, on stationery, and we'll have it stamped on our pants too. You could say that it represents the unification of 3 diverse forces — Pete, Tim and me — but it's also an impossibility, so take it how you want to really.

PETE GAVIN (Drummer)

I did a lot of dreary things — I worked in a cabaret band, a stocking factory, a succession of groups...Johnny/Mike & the Shades, the Shevelles, The Soul Pushers — but it was all as a result of my being too lethargic to move myself. I wasn't into anything really.... I wasn't even bothered about trying to improve my playing. When I first started on drums, I taught myself by playing along with 'The Atomic Mr Basie' and the MJQ's 'Pyramid', and these two extremes are still apparent in my style, but when I reached a basic stage of proficiency, I just took it easy. Then suddenly there seemed to be brilliant young drummers springing up all over the place, and I really felt like an ass for having been so lazy. So I suddenly woke up and made a concerted effort to pull myself together — and that was when I met Bernie in Bluesology, with whom I played for a while.

After that, I joined Tony Colton's Post & The One Man Band, which is a very good group. I suppose that sums up how I feel about Jody Grind — it had to be a really big carrot to pull me away from them. But, on the other hand, they were just a bit too commercial and contrived, though they've got some amazing players with them...like Albert Lee and Ray Smith, two incredible guitarists, and Pat Donaldson, who's a knockout bass player.

In our rehearsals I really feel as though I'm just about getting it all together for the first time, and it's a gas. My playing has always been brash and, in a way, nasty, which was a kind of compensation for an inferiority complex I suppose, but, as I say, it all seems to be different now, and I'm sure that Jody Grind is really going to happen.



The new JODY GRIND (see opposite):— Pete Gavin, Bernie Holland and Tim Hinkley



FROM COYNE-CLAGUE TO SIREN

Whilst I was hanging around waiting to interview Dave Clague and Kevin Coyne, I ran into a prominent journalist from a rival publication, and after we'd finished abusing each other and lying about our financial positions, I asked him if he'd ever heard of Coyne/Clague. He hadn't - which didn't really surprise me, because hardly anyone I'd spoken to had. They've never been the subject of full page ads in the Melody Maker, and they don't even employ a super active publicist to fill the Raver's column with snippets like "Coyne/Clague's drummer was attacked by Bolivian goat juggler in Lyceum dressing room last Friday". Not only that - but they don't wear python skin boots and velvet trousers, they don't live in Notting Hill, none of them has been sacked by John Mayall, ½ oz lumps of hash don't inadvertently fall to the floor as they take their handkerchiefs out and they aren't on first name terms with Eric Clapton.

Eek! Will they ever get off the ground? I really hope they do, because 1/ their single, "The Stride", was one of my favourites of last year, and 2/ they really have got a fresh approach, not necessarily to music (I can't really judge them on that, having heard only 4 tracks), but to the pop business.

The historical intricacies of the formation of the group are not only complicated, they are also vague, but simply the group is, - left to right in the picture of them getting inebriated - Kevin Coyne (singer), Tat Meager (drums), Dave Clague (bass), John Chichester (guitar) and there's also Nick Cudworth on piano, who you can see in the right side of the bottle.

Kevin came down from Preston at the instigation of the rest of the group who felt that they had something, but lacked a competent singer.

"I'd never tried to make it at all in the business before. For the past 4 years I was a social worker in a mental hospital. I'd rather have made it writing or painting, but singing and walling was something I've always done in my spare time. The last time I was in any group though, was when I was trying to get Chuck Berry and Chuck Willis stuff across in the Shadows kick-your-leg-in-unison era. And everyone in the band except John came out of that period, suffering under the weight of English mediocrity - Don Lang, and bad cover versions of American hits, that sort of thing".

"I used to buy every London-American record I could, in the days when everything that came out on that label was great, and some of those records have haunted me for years ... I suppose some aspects of the rock era are apparent in my own singing as a result".

Prior to Kevin's arrival, Dave Clague, who worked in the Bonzo Dog Band for 6 months before being booted out, had been loitering around pubs in Fulham, doing an occasional gig for Bill Niles Good Time Band, playing on demos of Tony Hazzard's songs, and forming Coyne Clague. Having assembled a group of musicians, he dragged them into a studio to assess their worth.

"We felt we had potential and took steps to realise it," said Dave, "by getting Kev down, and by recording some tapes".

He had been to a couple of record companies but couldn't come to terms with their contractual requirements or their studio direction, and had decided to produce the master tapes himself, which he did with a studio engineer friend called Tom Allom.

With four songs satisfactorily recorded, Dave started touting them round the companies again. CBS, Apple & Harvest didn't get over enthusiastic, so he went to see Clive Selwood of Dandelion Records, who gave them the "Shaping up well, come back in 6 months" bit. But he advised Dave to take them to John Peel, who was apparently knocked out by them.

As a result, the four songs were released simultaneously as two singles. Why two?

"John's idea", said Dave, "is that if it's good, it should be released - he doesn't think along any commercial lines - so Dandelion put both out at once, using the tapes we'd made as the masters. But they made a mistake on the label - instead of calling us Coyne/Clague, they just put Clague, and as well as that, the promotion by CBS wasn't too marvellous".

Consequently, neither exactly took the charts by storm or "swept the nation" as they say, but Kevin reckons that "The Stride" could have been a hit if it had been plugged enough. Thinking back to the days of Caroline, I reckon that practically any record could be a hit if it was plugged enough, but I agree that, with a bit of luck, it

could have been big.

"The Stride", - according to Kevin, "was a very early Coyne/Clague and was a sort of attempt to recreate a rock'n'roll sound of the late 50's with the piano and everything. We wrote it in about 3 minutes in Dave's bedroom, and the idea behind it came from "The Stroll" by the Diamonds. I wanted a combination of the Joe Turner kind of sound, the more commercial elements of late 50's rock, and a song about "Do the so and so", so we borrowed ideas from various sources. But I'd sung myself to death the night before, and the vocal isn't exactly as I'd have liked it."

However - on, on, on. Dandelion, underterred by their failure to win a Disc Silver Record, are releasing the group's first LP in the middle of February. Again the tracks were produced by Dave and Tom, but the record will appear as the initial album by Siren, rather than Coyne/Clague.

"The Dandelion label is being distributed by Elektra in America, and Jac Holzman, their president, seemed to think that our old name was too much of a mouthful for the Americans. So we changed it to Siren - it didn't matter to us really, not at this stage".

So far, apart from long residencies at two pubs (3 days each at Sid's in Fulham, and the Skinner's Arms at the Oval), they have only done one gig - with Medicine Head, another Dandelion group, whose harp player they were ecstatic about.

"People up North, where I come from", reckoned Kevin, "they believe anything they read in the MM without questioning anyone's values, and buy hyped records just to keep in the stream of what's new. I reckon we could get up with any of these hype groups and blast them off the stage - especially on rock material. For instance"

Dave leapt up to silence his mate - "I've been in London for about 3 years and one thing I've learnt is that you've got to be dead cautious about criticising anyone".

"Well that's the story of my life", replied Kevin, "I say something about someone and they come up and bash me on the head. That's the aggro in this band - Nick and I tend to speak our minds, and Dave keeps threatening us with cudgels to keep quiet. He's very wary of people who could finish us before we start - it's a bit like the Mafia really".

To keep himself occupied in short periods of inactivity, Kev is writing a book about rock'n'roll. He's currently on the chapter titled "Those who failed". "I feel that the subject has never been covered properly. It's either written about by people who don't really know enough about it, or else by people who insist on dragging out obscure artists and saying how fantastic they were, like someone has just come out saying that some guy called Charlie Feathers was better than any of the other old rockers. As far as I can see, the best people were the ones that were the most popular - like Fats Domino."

Meanwhile Dave does some sleeve designing for Dandelion - he did the one for Gene Vincent's album as well as their own.

Up to now, they have hardly made a penny between them, but, having just signed with an agency, and with their album coming out next month, I feel justified in ending the article with a phrase from the 'The Rock Writer's Encyclopaedia of Cliches'... the future looks bright for Siren.







JOHN LENNON

FACE OF THE SIXTIES

John Lennon is, more than any other male, the face of the sixties. By this, I mean he has shown the evolution from anti-school teenaged rock'n'roll enthusiast, to aware, hip person who realises the power of money and the crying need for peace, to the man who meets a woman he respects and gives up his star role for contentment. How many of us have followed this very path?

John, with his quizzical, stoned face, and his tremendous personal vibes, at once angry, at once calm. His recent involvement with the Plastic Ono Band is really just a manifestation of what he always was. A rebel with a cause. He is now more of an Ono Peace Band member than a Beatle. A year from now, he'll probably be just a person. If anyone had prevented him from forming the Ono Band, I'm sure he would have quit the Beatles.

This is to say that John has forsaken the role of musician for fun, for the role of public communicator. In England, where evolutionaries are as important as revolutionaries are in America, John is the ideal person to keep young people active in change without violence. We must have change, because we are more aware in 1970 than we were in 1960, and we must have a person who keeps reminding us "to give peace a chance". But can we expect him to do this forever?

Now that he is near the end of his public ministry, one wonders how he got there, to be Beatle-up-in-the-sky, in the first place. I think one answer is that John Lennon means a lot more to us in America than he does in England. Back in December 1963 - flashback - when some of us were introduced to his vibes on radio, and the mighty enthusiasm of "I want to hold your hand" rushed out at us, we were very unaware how energy (like his) could change a whole country. Now, 7 years later, we are more involved and active than we were then, thanks, in part, to him. The Beatles were a fantastic influence on America, not because of rock'n'roll music - there have been

bands as good as the Beatles since then - but because their life style appealed to the then isolated, unhip American kid. They suggested a kind of togetherness completely different from the bandstand rock 50s, and they suggested, more importantly, a 'no dependence on adults' mystique.

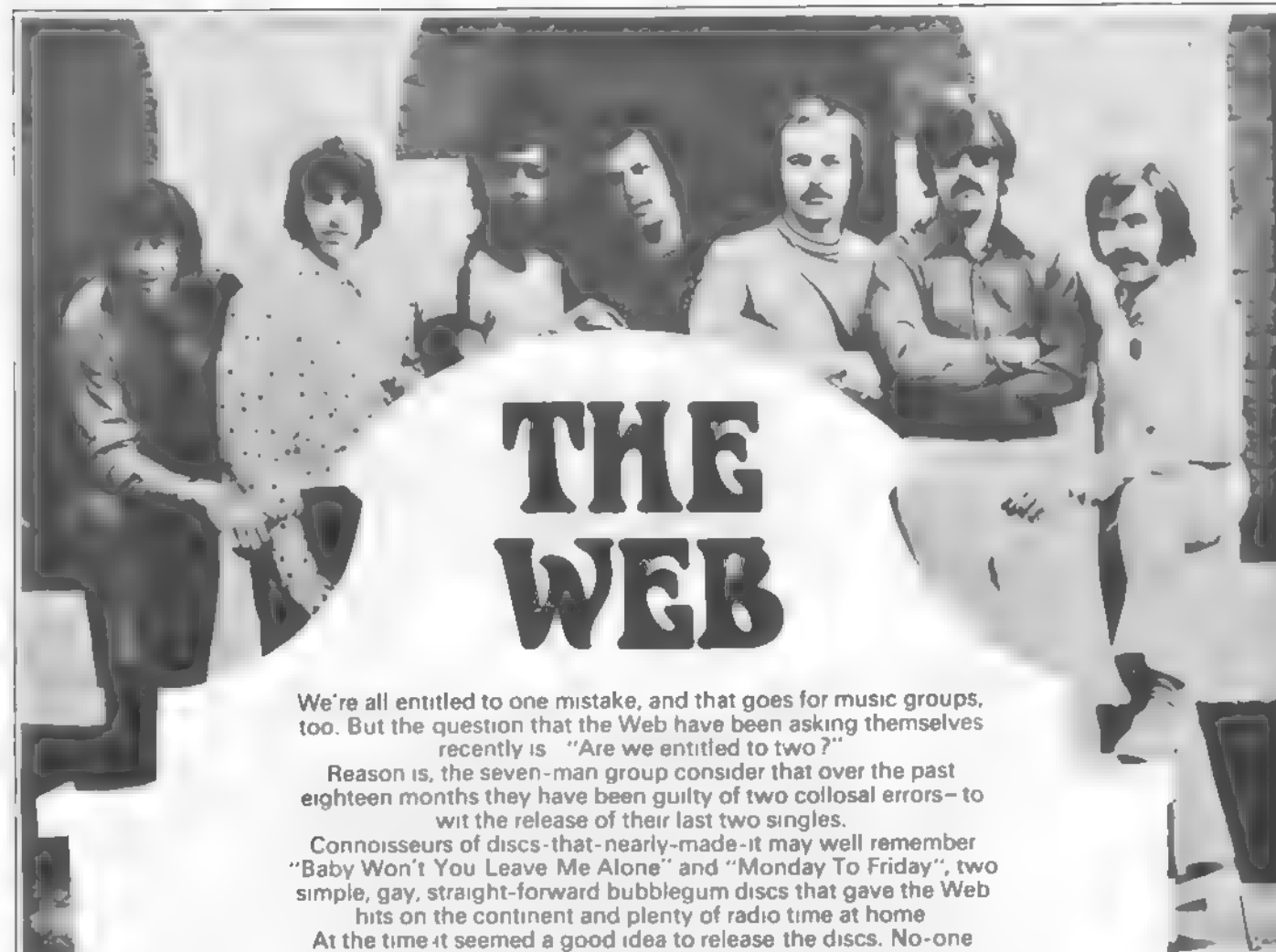
If Paul was America's favourite Beatle in 1963, John Lennon certainly was in '64, '65, '66, '67, '68 and '69. The reason was different each year. He grew and grew. Finally he hit the peak of his popularity in the States shortly before he married Yoko Ono. Yoko is more important to John than the Beatles are to him. This destroys, or at least toys with, the whole Beatle mystique. Lennon was top vibe man for the fab four... but after nearly 10 years, what do you want? The man is entitled to his personal happiness.

One of the greatest myths of the once mighty Beatles was the Lennon-McCartney song... they have been considered the greatest songwriting team of the sixties, but the myth that they write their songs together is just that. The songs are written individually and the Lennon-McCartney tag is automatically tacked on.

So now we know. The Beatles were never as in love with one another as the world thought. Yes. The sixties. They'll probably be known a hundred years from now as the decade of myth v reality. The decade of stoned freaks replacing artists. They'll also be more positively remembered as the decade during which love became less eros and more brotherly and sisterly. When John met Yoko, he changed his whole life, and got out of his trip. He went away from leadership of a generation, back to the rugged individualism of his Liverpool days. "I'm in love for the first time, don't you know it's gonna last" is all the man has to live for. Full circle. John has done his thing.

But now it's your turn.

John Kreidl.



We're all entitled to one mistake, and that goes for music groups, too. But the question that the Web have been asking themselves recently is "Are we entitled to two?"

Reason is, the seven-man group consider that over the past eighteen months they have been guilty of two colossal errors - to wit the release of their last two singles.

Connoisseurs of discs-that-nearly-made-it may well remember "Baby Won't You Leave Me Alone" and "Monday To Friday", two simple, gay, straight-forward bubblegum discs that gave the Web hits on the continent and plenty of radio time at home.

At the time it seemed a good idea to release the discs. No-one pretended that they were in any way representative of the Web's style of music, but it was thought that they stood a better chance than most of selling a lot of copies and giving the Web the kind of fame that every less-known group needs.

Today group leader Lennie Wright comments: "Sure it seemed right then. But the net result is, people have come to think of us as a bubblegum group. In the long run, although they made us some money, those two singles did us no good at all."

In an attempt to get their image straight again, the Web are now releasing a new album, titled "Theraphosa Blondi", the successor of their first L.P., "Fully Interlocking".

The album will, the Web believe, wipe out any concept in the public mind about bubblegum music, and replace it with a reputation for music with a capital "M". A combination of driving instrumentation and soaring vocals, coupled with a developed talent for composition, that give the Web a unique sound. People who bought or heard their first album - and that includes the critic of a posh Sunday newspaper who named it as one of the ten best albums released in 1968 - will know the standard of music to expect. Background to the Web is a simple one. They were originally six English boys from the South Coast who came to London where they recruited American-born singer John L. Watson. The original six are Lennie Wright, Kenny Beveridge, Tom Harris, Tony Edwards, John Eaton and Dick Lee.

Together they make exciting music. They make it on the new album that is no mistake at all.

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BLOWING KISSES TO THE CROWD,
SLEEPING IN THE RIVER,
SHOUTING HAPPY SONGS OUT LOUD,
FEELING LIKE A DINNER
THAT'S BEEN LEFT OUT IN THE COLD,
GROWING 10 YEARS THINNER,
LOSING, 29 YEARS OLD"

PETE BROWN



PETE BROWN reveals all to Jerry Floyd.

When the quartet broke up (The First Real Poetry Band)(see chart), I knew that in my next enterprise I wanted to sing... so I got a band together that I just had to call The Battered Ornaments. There were a lot of b own minds about then - people who had opened the doors of consciousness and couldn't close them again - and, in the early stages of rehearsal, we sometimes had up to 10 people. As a singer, I had little confidence, but we rehearsed and rehearsed, narrowed it down to only 7 people, and when we thought the time was right we went to Jenner and King (Black hill), who agreed to try and do something for us... "try" being the operative word.

At that time, there was this peculiar kick back from the psychedelic era - Middle Earth was on its last legs at the Roundhouse, using big names like the Fleetwood Mac to pull audiences - and we couldn't seem to find a niche. We were very jazz orientated as a group... they were going towards a free jazz and I wanted to get a more simple but solid expression of my songs, which was why we ultimately split. The Ornaments had a name for quite some time when we did a really good gig, it wasn't too bad, but we didn't do too many really good ones - but it was a bunch of very extraordinary people, and there were great clashes of personality. It was a mistake to try and make a group out of such incompatible people and it seemed that we never could come to terms with each other. Anyway, we split up and I got Piblokto! together and that's proving to be the most satisfying thing I ever did.

Some of our material is left over from the old group, but most of it is new... and I've learnt not to attempt more than one trumpet number per set. When I first started off with the Ornaments I was trying to be a Jewish Roland Kirk - you know, like playing 2 trumpets at once, singing, playing conga, talking drum, psychedelic triangle and all the rest of it. And it was a bad scene for me, because after the first number and a half, I was out of breath. Eventually, the Ornaments persuaded me to drop the trumpet - for the sake of their ears and my health - and now I limit my use of it, and have turned to the talking

drum; I play 3 numbers a night on it, and I'm very pleased about it.

The album we've just recorded is numbers which we do on stage, except 'The Art School Dance', which we are still rehearsing for live performance. I had this big influence in my youth, of going to these infamous dances at St Martins Art College and coming in touch with the first English freakouts, and listening to the Temperance Seven, the Alberts, and Cy Laurie. I think that the art school scene provided a lot of the initial impulses in pop today - just consider some of the musicians who came out of art colleges; Pete Townshend, John Lennon, Jimmy Page, some of the Family, etc. The song on the LP is about these people actually becoming what they were dressed up as... people used to dress up for fun until they realised that they wanted to wear these clothes all the time, which was quite an important move as regards freedom of expression.

I produced the album myself - basically because I'd had my fill of producers in one way or another. I thought that, being involved with the material, I knew what I wanted it to sound like... so I asked EMU if they'd let me do it and they agreed. I think it was quite successful, and, as a result, I'm also producing James Litherland's (ex Colosseum) new band.

I like to be in control of my own destiny, and as such, I'm my own producer, band leader, and manager - in as much as I take all the decisions - and it all seems to work because we've achieved a fair degree of efficiency - a thing I was never highly regarded for before. A tour of the continent is coming up, and we may even set foot in the New World this year, but meanwhile we're doing about 3 or 4 gigs a week.

Apart from my work with the group, I'm pretty busy involved in songwriting. I'm writing for Jack Bruce's new album... a different kind of song - more extended. They're not pop opera kind of things, but have an air of pantomime, to me anyway. They're a bit more sentimental, but at the same time, have more depth. And I've just written this thing for Colosseum called 'Velvet Iron Curtains'... it's a very

strange number with words like 'I've got milk in my shoes and it's slowly turning sour'. I don't know if they're going to use it. But I'm getting a huge conscience about my writing... I try not to be dull, but it's so easy to think 'Oh yes, that fits in OK' and shove it in. I've written some pretty feeble songs which I'm not too wild about, but I'm trying not to become a hack. I work on the principle that if it's not inspired, it just doesn't happen.

Some of the songs I've written with Jack have taken an awfully long time... like the Clearout and Wierd of Hermiton took 2½ years each before we really got what we wanted in our minds. White Room took ages and ages, but we bashed away at it. Finally Jack took it to America to record but the words got lost somewhere along the way, and I had to write them again and relay them over the transatlantic telephone to Jack, who was all hysterical and things. Doing That Scrapyard Thing was done in the same way - over the phone to America... he played me this backing track, which I taped at about 5 in the morning on this primitive recording equipment. But in the end he brought the backing over and we re-worked the words - Jack did quite a lot of them on that because it was an autobiographical song.

As far as songwriting goes, I don't want to make a business out of it - it was primarily an extension of the fact that I was able to write poetry and words. Obviously I make a lot of money out of it, but it's because they're good songs done by good people, not because I want to make money. I dig money and live well... if I wasn't on the road I'd still live well, but I want to go on the road, so I do. The road is a great leveller... you know, Wimpeys for everybody, whoever you are.

Songs I write for myself are easier because I've got my own standards and know what I want. With Jack it's a question of getting further and further into his mind, and sometimes I feel that I'm too far into his mind and strange things happen. When he first got me writing songs for them, I was a total bum without a halfpenny to write my name on, but I thought it would be a good idea in as much as I'd always dug their individual playing, and it was

PETE BROWN'S MUSICAL CAREER

THE CENTRAL QUINTET (1958)

WITH GEORGE KHAN - Amateur college group

NEW DEPARTURES (1960-1965)

WITH MIKE HOROWITZ & OTHERS VARYING FROM GIG TO GIG -

DICK HECKSTALL SMITH, GEORGE KHAN, GRAHAM BOND, LES CONDON, BOBBY WELLINS, JOHN MUMFORD

'Collapsed after disagreement'

PETE BROWN & HIS JAZZ & POETRY GROUP (1966)

WITH JOHN SURMAN, PETE LEMUR, ALAN JACKSON, RON RUBIN, VINCENT CRANE,

DANNY THOMPSON & PHIL SEAMAN

Never played a gig. Were supposed to play one at Newcastle, but Vincent Crane's P.D. Van broke down & they never made it. "Probably just as well, actually."

BROWN'S POETRY (1966-67)

WITH TONY ROBERTS, DANNY THOMPSON, PHIL SEAMAN, HENRY LOUTHER & LAURIE ALLEN

Doing poems set to music, during early UFO days. "Broke up when I began to get more psychedelically orientated"

NEON BLACKLIST (1967)

WITH GRAHAM BOND, DAVE GRAHAM, LAURIE ALLEN, PETE BAILEY, DANNY THOMPSON

Designed as "a multi mixed media, freakout, total horror scene. Heavy wasn't the word for it - but it didn't get off the ground." Played only 1 gig

THE HUGE LOCAL SUN (1967)

WITH JOHN MUMFORD, DICK HECKSTALL SMITH, JOHN MITCHELL, BINKY MCKENZIE, LAURIE ALLEN, GRAHAM LAYDON, PHIL LEE, JOHN MCLAUGHLIN, DANNY THOMPSON.

Originally formed to perform songs he'd written for Graham Bond, who never got round to recording them. "This band was actually turned down as being full of 'yeggs', which was just ridiculous. If it'd just announced the names of the band, the audience would have gone mad"

THE FIRST REAL POETRY BAND (1967-1968)

WITH BINKY MCKENZIE, JOHN MCLAUGHLIN, LAURIE ALLEN & PETE BAILEY

"Basically a bluesy band in which I rarely sang, but this was when I did start doing 'The Politician'"

PETE BROWN & HIS BATTERED ORNAMENTS (1968-1969)

WITH CHRIS SPEDDING, BUTCH POTTER, GEORGE KHAN, CHARLIE HART (Wt), PETE BAILEY,

JAMIE MUIR (replaced by ROBTART)(replaced by LAURIE ALLEN).

Released album "A Meal you can shake hands with in the dark"

PETE BROWN & PIBLOKTO! (1969 ->)

Name derived from Mal Dean comic strip exclamation

WITH JIM MULLIN (guitar), DAVE THOMPSON (organ/sax), LAURIE ALLEN (drums)(replaced by ROBTART), ROGER BURN (bass)(replaced by STEVE GLOVER)

Released a single "Living Life backwards / High flying electric bird"

Album due immediately

a good way for me to get further into music. My first attempts were midway between far out poetry and pure bathos; i.e. real shit... but very soon after that, it became apparent that Jack and I shared this very strange, common, emotional area in which we now operate. Cream could've found someone much more commercial, but because of this thing with Jack, it continued to work very successfully.

I liked Cream as a band, but I must say that I much prefer Jack's 'Songs for a Tailor' album, which just knocks me out and I know that his next one is going to knock me out more, because he's one of the 3 best musicians in pop. I don't like many English groups, though one that I really do like is the Soft Machine... and I like Family, the Who and Graham Bond From America. I've always dug the Byrds, electric Dylan and the Band - totally - more than anyone else in fact.... their latest LP is so basic and so unbullshitty and so true, and so full of images - it's just great. And Spirit I've always liked because that would seem to be the best way to use jazz influences - in a very cool kind of way, with nice words and mellow sounds. I'm not too sure about the strings they use, but I like their group sound.

Some people used to reckon that the Ornaments were a bit like the Mothers, but I was never mad over Zappa. I only like 2 of his records - 'Absolutely Free' and 'We're only in it for the money', which is the truth and at least they know that. I'm not too fond of his music, which I find too obvious for the most part, and it's mostly a ragbag anyway. I'm a fairly considerable purist at heart, and I believe in authenticity and people trying to find out what

they really are, and being it... but I know that it's often impossible. It's so easy in the pop scene to get covered with a veil of hype and believe it all - believe that you're that, when you're not. I can't bear all the hype groups - your Indian influenced groups, your classical influenced ones and so on. It's all rubbish. There may be some good musicians hidden in it all, but what they're doing is at least 70% dishonest, which isn't good enough for me.

The terrible meetings of the beginnings of the new scene and the dregs of the old one made some disastrous marriages - still, they'll all be chronicled. But very few people seem to be able to see it in perspective.... I mean, I can't - I've only got glimmerings - but all the pop histories so far don't seem to understand. In fact, one of the things they don't understand is that they started off with a phenomenon which wasn't music... it was a commodity like Daz, and halfway along, it suddenly became music, and a lot of people didn't want to think about that. They just didn't want to know about the implications - it was alright for a jazz musician to play music to about 20 people, or for it to be played in a concert hall, but if you had an audience of 20,000 it was very dodgy. Knowing that everyone has power complexes - even I do - it's quite dangerous really, but I don't think that the early groups wanted any power... they just wanted the money, the chicks and the plastic armchair bit. But suddenly it became apparent that by playing music you had the power to influence people to do things - and that, of course, is very dangerous. We'd better not say any more about that.... except that I have my plans.

I used to drink and things because I wanted to get out of my mind - not because I had any hang ups, though I'm sure I had a lot of sub-conscious hang ups; like I was a frustrated musician, and being on the road as a poet, which I was for 6 or 7 years, was very lonely in some ways. So I was putting away ridiculous amounts of alcohol as well as other things, because it seemed right at the time, and consequently, I was pretty much out of my head for a lot of the time - probably starting from when I was about 14 and going through various crazes of various things. However, I was always averse to actually making a human pin cushion out of myself, and never took the first steps towards doing so. But I went through most other things, fairly meaninglessly, until 3 years ago, when it reached a kind of climax and I went 'Freak Out! Freak Out!' and felt as though I were losing the threads. In fact I felt as if there were very few threads left, so I stopped... very abruptly... everything... and having done so, realised how much I'd leaned on it. It was pretty awful sometimes - as a result of having stopped and of having had too much, but I started to get further into music, which I couldn't do if I was taking anything - even drink - it would just upset my balance. I've got a balance now, which is a way of life, and I try as much as I can to eat healthy food - ha! 'try' but it's pretty difficult on the motorways of England. I simply couldn't do the energy thing at all if I was on anything... I don't need it anymore, anyway.

I make a few faces at times, but I'm very happy with what I'm doing. All I need is music, a fair amount of health, my girl friend, and more music.

HEAD SOUNDS BY Andy Dunkley

This month, two imports:-
CONTINUED by Tony Joe White (Monument)
WILLY & THE POOR BOYS by Creedence
Clearwater Revival (Fantasy)

Tony Joe White's first album, 'Black & White' was, despite the inclusion of two excellent hit singles, a failure. It was saddled with an unimaginative producer who insisted on applying the old American tactic of turning out a collection of other people's hits in the hope that sales would come on song recognition alone. The fact that many of the hits fell into the 'Little Green Apples' bag didn't help matters; but fortunately for everybody, Monument Records sat up and took notice of Tony Joe's string of self-written chart singles and 'Continued', which uses all his own material too, is as much a success as 'Black & White' was a failure. Right from the first cut, the reaction is "let's hear some more then", and this is maintained right through the album. Each track picks you up, dusts you down and gives you a friendly pat on the head before leading you into the rest and even the slow numbers - 'Rainy Night in Georgia' for instance - exude joy and friendliness.

But it is on the down home numbers like 'Elements and Things' that Tony Joe really comes into his own. The secret is under-statement. Like Frank Zappa, Tony Joe White has a feeling for the wah-wah guitar and rarely wastes a note. When he does forsake under-statement for a little bit of complex picking one is inclined to shout with joy; not because of any relief of what is non-existent boredom, but

because you knew he was going to play that series of notes anyhow.

All of which is aided and abetted by a line-up of musicians who would appear to be cast from the same mould as Tony Joe White - even down to the under-statement. In particular the organ work of Mike Utley is worth mentioning. Listen to him as he echoes Tony Joe White's wah-wah, each note light and distinct, but with soul; as if some exuberant hip Tinkerbell were tripping about the keys.

Only when brass is occasionally added does any real heaviness (in its literal sense) instil itself. 'Old Man Willis' is more good ole rock'n'roll than swamp music. Yes, you did read it right. Swamp Music. The label-loving pop world has struck again. "How are we going to start a trend if we don't put a label on it!?" Columbia, Capitol, M.G.M. etc., said that!

"It sounds like Creedence's Bayou music with spit and polish" - I, and no doubt thousands of others, said that! No. The real label is Good Music with a capital G.

When predictions are made for 1970, mine would have been that Tony Joe White was going to take over where Creedence left off. 'Left off' because the Green River album indicated that Creedence was going stale and that John Fogerty was running out of tunes. Boredom was setting in. 'Would have been' because that was before 'Willie & the Poor Boys', which is the title of Creedence Clearwater Revival's new album. (Incidentally Creedence seem to release albums almost as often as Robert Stigwood denies Blind Faith has broken up. Either they really believe in making hay while the sun shines or J. Fogerty & Co. plus the whole staff of Fantasy Records are a bunch of speed-freaks). Having run out of all the possible combinations and permutations that could be made in Bad

Moon Rising, experiment seems to be the order of the day.

The country Blues which ran through the previous album is still there, but there are additives. "Down on the Corner" is about Americanized Reggae (without the boredom). "It Came out of the Sky" and "Fortunate Son" owe much to Carl Perkins. "Feelin' Blue" has Fogerty doing all the lkettes parts for the "Gong Gong Song" at one and the same time.

It is the sleeve for the album that indicates the direction that Creedence Clearwater Revival might be going in when all the experimenting is over. Pictured in more rich browns and greys that I would have thought existed is John Fogerty playing acoustic guitar and looking for all the world like a hirsut Lonnie Donegan, even down to the gritted-teeth grin. The comparison does not stop at looks either; also present are harmonica, washboard and Bayou style tea-chest base, and the two best numbers on the album are "Cotton Fields" and "Midnight Special" - both skiffle favourites. But there the comparison does stop... Donegan never ever sounded like this. The two numbers seem so crisp and fresh they could have been written yesterday. If Fantasy are looking for another chart single for Creedence, "Cotton Fields" is an absolute cert.

I said that "Willie and the Poor Boys" was experimental. This time the experiment has worked and Creedence have come up with their best and most appealing album ever. On this showing Tony Joe White won't take over as has been suggested earlier.

The way I see it, it will be a neck and neck race with no losers. I hope so. The quality of "Continued" and "Willie and the Poor Boys" shows there is room for both Tony Joe White and Creedence Clearwater Revival, and the only label is GOOD MUSIC!!!



The Move smashing up TV sets; midnight queuing in Tottenham Court Road; small ads for the Pink Floyd in the very early issues of International Times; listening to Smoke at the Roundhouse; pop journalists dropping words like "auto-destruction" and "psychedelia"; various companies sniffing out the commercial possibilities of a new fad; the 24 hour dream; the giant Roundhouse jelly; a happy Hoppy; primitive light shows; smart aleck lapel buttons and plastic flowers; first signs of public outcry over 'the drug menace'; a lot of things happening all of a sudden, all at once. 1966/67 - a very intense period... and amongst it all, the vivid recollection of a bass player wearing a cowboy hat surmounted by huge model glider wings, and with rouge on his face so that he

looked like a marionette. And a song that he wrote for his group, the Soft Machine - 'Love makes sweet music' - THE classic single of the era. The group went travelling, and next thing I knew, they had a new bass player... Kevin Ayers must have got lost somewhere along the way.

Last month, advertisements proclaimed his return. A new album - 'Joy of a Toy'. A really excellent album, but seemingly submerged in the pre-Christmas deluge. I visited the prestige offices of Black-hill Enterprises and asked Peter Jenner, who had produced it, to talk about the various aspects of the record.

JOY OF A TOY

by PETER JENNER

I knew Kevin vaguely from the early days, when I was managing Pink Floyd, because we played a lot of gigs with the Soft Machine, who were like our deadly rivals at the time, the other team. Then after the UFO era, they disappeared off to Europe, then off to America, and I didn't see them for ages. Then, when they got back from America, I got in touch with Mike Ratledge, their organist who used to have a flat above me, where he spent most of the time pounding his piano and driving me mad. And it was through him that I got to hear Kevin's songs - he'd left the Soft Machine by then.

I'm not sure of the circumstances which led to his leaving the group, but I think that they actually broke up, having got completely demoralised and cheesed off after their States tour, and then, surprised by the demand for them in Europe, had decided to reform. I may be speaking out of turn, but I believe that they had an atrocious time in America, going from city to city, playing second billing to Hendrix, and facing huge feelingless places, and people who weren't really interested in them at all - they'd only come to see Hendrix... and the outcome was that Kevin just didn't feel like going on the road again so soon. After a while, realising that he'd got to make a living, I suppose, he made these tapes of songs he'd written.

Possibly another reason for his departure from the Machine was a musical one - he is, in a bizarre way, more melodic and less musical than they are; he's not so into playing weird times, and very fast, and very musical, like they are now. He's more interested in tunes, and people dancing, and enjoying himself, and less into music as a serious art form. He's writing pop and isn't ashamed of it - he considers himself a pop musician rather than a jazz musician.

Anyway, I took the tapes along to EMI, and, with Harvest just starting up, they liked the idea of my producing an album of Kevin's songs. As it was, I think that my technique on the album benefited from the mistakes I'd made on my previous two - The Third Ear Band and the Edgar Broughton Band. For in-

stance, on the 3rd Ear, I didn't think the stereo spread was as good as it should have been, and I don't think I got as good a sound as I could have done. As well as that, I think it was too long - it tends to go on, and consequently bores some people. But that LP didn't cost very much, inasmuch as the band just went in and recorded it.

With the Broughton album, I certainly should have got a better sound, particularly on the drums. Steve is a very loud, exciting drummer, and uses cymbals a lot, but if one tries to recreate a cymbal dominated drummer, it sounds pretty awful because it comes out too cymbally, with a very peculiar frequency punching out at the listener. But that sort of thing you learn to overcome - like Steve now knows, and I know and the engineer knows, how to control his cymbal use. Another fault with that record was poor use of stereo, but that was a bit tricky at the time because EMI had only one 8 track studio. I think that was a pity, because it does make such a difference when you have a good stereo sound. The other main thing with Edgar was that we hadn't quite resolved where we were - it was neither careful not prepared enough on some tracks to be a good studio album, and it wasn't live enough to be a good live sound... but these problems have been ironed out on the new Edgar record.

So we all learn as we go on - one gets to know the difference between optimum live and optimum studio sounds, and the characteristics of each studio. For example, in EMI studio No. 3, drums have a good sound, but in No. 2 which is large and high ceilinged, the drums sound very echoey, one can't get a sharp sound. So what they tend to do, is record them very muffled and damped down, and that's why Ringo has that pounding sound, because the Beatles use No. 2 studio. And things like microphone positions are important inasmuch as relatively small movements often cause a great deal of difference, but it all depends on studio characteristics, which one has to familiarise oneself with.

Anyway, Kevin had made these incredibly good demos of all his songs, complete with arrangements which were very similar to those on the re-

cord, and this competency on his part caused one of our biggest hangups. Because of the idiosyncracies of his recording equipment - relatively cheap mikes, and tape machine, and his own idea of recording techniques, he got various sounds, which he felt worked with the songs. Consequently, we got into a lot of bother trying to accurately recreate these sounds, and I think that it was a mistake that he was so prepared, though I know Kevin wouldn't agree with me on that. On one or two songs, I think it's apparent, if not obviously so, that we breathed a huge sigh of relief when he got a sound remotely approaching the original, and used that take when we could probably have improved on it. But it was great in that he knew what he wanted each song to sound like, and how each should relate to the others, and so on, and that was fine... but, as I say, he was just a bit un-open to new possibilities, and I suspect that he has learnt from that. It was good in that I feel a producer's role is to get down what the artiste wants and to negotiate all the hurdles, and I feel that from that point of view, the record was successful.

When it was decided that I produce the album for Harvest, Ian Knight, who is mixed up with Implosion and the management of the Soft Machine, found this guy called David Bedford, who I'd never heard of before, to do some arrangements. I subsequently discovered that David Bedford is in fact, a very respected young English composer, who had a work performed at the Proms this (1969) year, and he worked very well with Kevin and produced some really excellent arrangements. Apparently he's been to every single gig the Who have ever done in England, since they were the High Numbers - he's a complete Who freak - and he's really into pop music as well as classical. He played piano on the record as well, and really seemed to enjoy himself.

Having worked out what we wanted, we went in and recorded most of the bass, drums, acoustic guitar and piano tracks. The drums were done mainly by Robert Wyatt from the Soft Machine, but on two tracks they were played by Rob Tait of Piblokto! (then the Battered Ornaments), because they were done as loop tapes, they had an odd syncopation in them, and we wanted absolute consistency, to give an incessant rhythm thing to drive you mad - like on Oleh Oleh Bandong and Stop this Train.

Then we did the tracks on which we used session men, who were mainly people we knew; Paul Minns from the Third Ear Band, Mike Ratledge from the Soft Machine, and Paul Buckmaster, who'd just left the Third Ear. Then we had a session cellist, who was very good, Jeff Clyne on string bass, some people who we got through EMI's session fixer, some others that my wife, who used to work for a classical agent, found for us, and in fact we were very fortunate and found some excellent people who really enjoyed it. On some of the string things, we managed to get a very good sound, because we miked it like a classical session - with the mikes suspended at a distance rather than close up, so we got more resonance and a more natural, pure sound in a way.

Sean Murphy, who's the Soft Machine's manager, got the two girls in to sing on Oleh Oleh Bandong. I don't know where they came from - I think he literally picked them up off the street - they were two little Scottish girls who'd never sung in their lives before, and we somehow managed to get them to sing in Malay. David Bedford put on his



KEVIN AYERS

schoolmaster authority and instructed them as to what to do, and they responded beautifully. We tried to stay as unobtrusive as possible and recorded them almost when they weren't looking. The whole track was a gas.

Then there was the ghastly saga of Town Feeling. This was one of the nicest tracks, but we got into a problem with tuning - there was something not quite right, so we started compensating the tuning of other instruments on successive overdubs, and it slowly drifted apart. In the end we had to completely re-record the song on the backing track, which was luckily still intact.

Lastly we put on the vocals, where we ran into another problem. Kevin has a very nice voice, but a very limited range, and it took a long time to get the vocals sounding right. But to compensate for that, he tends to write songs that suit his voice - rather like Leonard Cohen, who has a horrific voice, but gets away with it.

For the "mass" chorus on the first track, we used Kevin, his wife, Sean, Robert Wyatt - only about 4 or 5 people - and recorded it 3 or 4 times.

Finally we did the tracks of Kevin on his own, or just with David Bedford - like Lady Rachel, Girl on a Swing, and Crazy Gift of Time.

The whole thing took a ridiculously long time to complete because everything was new to us (Kevin was in on it from start to finish), and it cost £4000, which is one of the crosses I now have to bear, or rather one of the crosses EMI has to bear. This amount is almost all attributable to studio time - it took an absolutely unbelievable time to mix, quite apart from the very long time it took to record. We had session men to pay as well, and we used them as if they were a group - we had them sitting around

until we needed them. (One of the reasons that companies like to record groups is that they don't have to pay any session fees).

As to the mixing, I think we got to grips with stereo on this one... I think it's a pretty good mix. There's an awful lot in there, but it still sounds clean - possibly because Kevin is such a fantastic perfectionist... he knows just what he wants and goes on until he gets it, which I think is great. But it did take such a long time.

If Kevin had come to me and said, "Here are the songs", and I'd said "OK, I'll get an arranger to work on them, and we'll rendezvous next Friday at EMI No 2, we'll have 6 sessions with 10 musicians on each, and we'll get it done"... it could have been done that way, but it wouldn't have been the same record. As it is, everyone had to come together at EMI's expense - Kevin, David, the musicians and me. But as regards the cost, EMI are going to make money on Kevin in the end because he's such a good songwriter, and I think they realise this and aren't too worried about my nearly doubling their original budget of £2 000.

Basically, I feel a record producer's job is complete when the record is finished, and then it's up to the record company, the publisher, artist, manager and agent to promote it, but I feel that it's a good record and wish that all those people would take more active steps to get it going. How well the record will sell, I can't say. I certainly feel that the advertising for it, though I wrote the copy myself, was fairly shitty, and I don't think EMI will be too horrified if I say that I think their publicity agents are terrible - they're really bad, they've

got no ideas whatsoever. EMI are a great company to work with - they're great at selling and distribution - but you've got to be aware of their limitations. As regards the advert for Joy Of A Toy, we were caught on the hop, without anyone having worked out an idea, so we just tried to use our intelligence and advertised in just Rolling Stone, Time Out, IT, and Zigzag. It got a good review in Time Out - it was quite out of the blue, and very good - which really turned me on.

The trouble with the English system of distribution is that once the dealer has bought the record from the wholesaler, he's stuck with it and must sell it. It's not done on a sale or return basis like in America, so with Joy Of A Toy, dealers will be reluctant to carry it in stock - because it's not in the charts and hasn't had a huge publicity campaign. The tyranny of the singles chart has been got rid of, but we still have the tyranny of the LP charts - so that, unless you go to one of the hipper shops, the record will have to be ordered specially.

Pete Drummond and John Peel have both played tracks on the radio, but that's about all. So as far as exposure goes, it hasn't been particularly wide. I think it'll sell mainly on personal recommendation until Kevin gets back on the road.

Originally, he thought he'd make enough from the record not to have to go on the road, but now he realises that he'll probably have to go on the road to promote the sales. So now he's in the process of getting a band together - there are several alternative courses at the moment, but it should be worked out by about the middle of January, and his next LP will probably be the results of having his own band again.

Yes it's FRIARS!?

FRIARS AYLESBURY every Monday at the New Friarage Hall, Walton Street. Jan 5 - EAST of EDEN Jan 12 - WRITING ON THE WALL. Jan 19 - RARE BIRD. Jan 26 - HEAVY JELLY. Feb 2 - MOTT THE HOOPLE. Feb 9 - STEAMHAMMER. Then see MM

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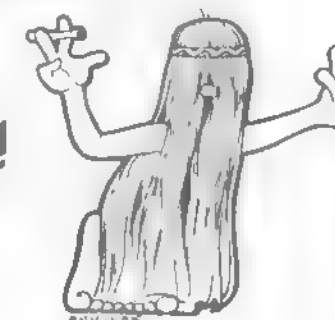
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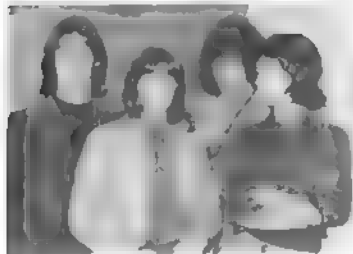
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OLDER THAN YESTERDAY

Roscoe Murphy used to drum with Levian - the third British act, after the Incredible and Ejection, to be signed by the Elektra label. They broke up and now, wiser, he is involved in a new group venture called Hellmet.

"Well, firstly the Leviathan split was quite amicable. Apart from me, only Brian of the old group is still into playing, and he now lives in Tonbridge and is looking for a group in that area. We had one main drawback with regard to Leviathan which occurred before we even went under that name, but I'll come to that later. Other things which didn't help much were that latterly we had no manager and any necessary hustling had to be done by the group itself, although we had a good deal of help from Clive Selwood of Elektra and Dave Robson of Paragon, with regard to both advice and bookings. We even had a BBC 2 programme about us called 'A Year in the Life' but we were unable to make anything of it. We made a complete LP, but that was never brought out. The television thing happened too late really. If it had been shown soon after it was made, we might have got some more bookings on the strength of it, but I don't know..."

But the main reason for their lack of success was managerial mishandling, and Roscoe's story will be of interest to any inexperienced group thinking of throwing in their lot with someone they don't know too well. He went on to explain about his troubles. (The name of the person in question has been disguised for obvious reasons.)

"Our big hangup was a guy called X. When I joined the Mike Stuart Span, he was their manager and he was also later the manager of Extreme Sound and Motion, two other local groups. As the Span cut down to a four man group, and Elektra got interested, he became very involved with the band, and really worked hard for us. But then he got this idea, which was, I think, to be our downfall. He said that he wanted to buy a record shop in which the four members of the band and he would each have a twenty per cent interest. The idea was to make any money that we earned grow, so that we should have something to fall back on if bad times came. It sounded OK, so we did it. Then we went on the month of continental gigs, to Germany and Belgium. When we left, everything was fine, but when we got back, all his time was spent in attending to the record shop, and there was no time for us. That didn't please us. Then there was the thing about money. He was to take 50% of our earnings to use to pay commission, expenses and all that, and we were supposed to get 25% between us. The other 25% was his fee as manager. This was after the shop was paid for. But we rarely got what we were supposed to; it was always "You need new stage costumes", and that sort of thing. He had always

spent it all before we got to being paid. There was always a cheque coming which was spent already. He had this thing about being a second Brian Epstein, in fact that's what he used to say, "one day I'm going to be the new Brian Epstein, and if you boys stay with me, I'll take you with me". But anyway, it got to the stage when we got fewer and fewer gigs, and he didn't want to know about anything but his shop. We then got to the stage when we weren't on speaking terms. We just went to see him to get paid, and he wasn't even straight with us then. You wouldn't think that a vicar's son could be like that."

"He still owes us quite a lot. We've been to ask him for it, and we even got a solicitor onto it. I think we got one small payment, but it's always "I can't afford it".

Ray Mellors and Terry Aiken, also in Hellmet, were in another of X's groups - Motion.

"He dropped us like a hot brick too", said Ray, "though we weren't so financially involved. But I remember on the television programme, there was a shot of him in his new luxury pad watching Leviathan on some TV show and he was saying, "Well if that's the best they can do, they can go back to the building site". Gratitude - after they own most of his shop. Then when they left him he said "I'm through with groups for good". But he's got a new one now, called Success".

Mr. X took them for a ride in another way too. Roscoe explained:

"One other thing which hit us very hard at the time of the split was the question of National Insurance. When we started getting fairly large sums for playing, he made this suggestion that we should have a small rise each, but then he said that we should stay as we were and he would buy our insurance stamps. We agreed to that, and everything seemed to be fine. Until the split came, and we tried to go on the dole till we could find some sort of work. And then guess what? He hadn't stamped the cards at all. We were really stuck".

After Roscoe's experiences - Hellmet intend to tread carefully. They have yet to appear publicly, and are continuing their other jobs until they get firmly established.

Steve Day, the fourth member, is enthusiastic about their material, and the way that their combined musical sympathy improves their individual work.

I don't feel competent to draw any conclusions about their music yet - I've only heard them at rehearsal in a cramped basement room - but I must say that I find them much more interesting and promising than many of the super hype bands I am inveigled into seeing by various undoubtedly well meaning but musically unaware people.



the BUTTERFIELD BLUES band

The memory will never fade for me of a freezing night near the end of 1966. It was a Friday, and a more-joyful-than-Christmas event was going to occur on the box. I was dead excited that a band which up to then had been just a name with a growing reputation would actually be seen that night. I had first heard of Butterfield in the musical press, when Eric Burdon, moving flats, was quoted as having taken the following essential gear with him in his taxi: his record player, some early Elvis albums and the Paul Butterfield Blues Band LP. A recommendation not to be disregarded by an Animals fan in the days before they needed a vet. I bought the album and played it to the exclusion of all else for a solid six months; I was wild for Butterfield, for Bloomfield, for the whole band. Then a British visit was planned - amazing! On Ready Steady Go, they were as great as anybody can be on that narrow medium, but that was just a whiff - at the most unlikely venue in North London, the Golders Green Refectory (famed for its regular Friday night Irish dance punch-up), the BBB would be giving its sole live performance. I don't remember whether it was cold or not, although I suspect that the season would guarantee nut-freezing temperatures, but a queue of mammoth proportions for this hall was waiting, straggling along the Finchley Road, like Morrison's snake; not an apprehensive face in sight, save those worthies who hadn't heard that the Irish dance had been cancelled.

Eventually the man took our ten bobs - that seemed good value for an American band until I heard an unconfirmed (still unconfirmed) rumour that the band was getting sixty pounds for the gig - sixty quid! Anyway, we crowded into the pokey basement, thrusting our way to the front - we had to get near to the stage to see Bloomfield's slide guitar.

We suffered the usual indignities of an English crowd going to see an American band in those days, i.e. a suspect sound system and the inevitable second class soul band of the era, ruining their lungs and our ears.

Then, exactly an hour before closing time, they clambered on, and after a fairly long tune up, leapt off into their memorable music, which, in its urgency, contracted time to the extent that they started to go off after what seemed like only a few minutes; in fact they'd torn through a large portion of their first two albums. Yells for more got them back.

"What do you want to hear?" asked Butter-

field.

"East West," someone shouted.

"You're joking", said Butterfield, and they ripped into their somewhat biographical 'Born in Chicago'... and then they were gone.

The Irish promoter, stunned, blurted out "That's the best band to have hit this town in years". Possibly a somewhat unoriginal exclamation, but true... and that was the first and last time that the Butterfield Blues Band came to England. Only their records and enthusing followers remain to remind us of that night in NW 11.

A new Butterfield album has just been released; produced by Jerry Ragavoy, whose name is never unlinked with his song 'Piece of my heart', and there's a definite improvement over 'Pigboy Crabshaw' and 'In my own dream' - both John Court productions. (The first two albums were done by the well nigh immortal Paul Rothchild and the difference between these and the next two, even allowing for the loss of Bloomfield, is quite startling). Ragavoy has ordered what was developing into a cruddy mess into a band akin to Blood, Sweat and Tears in many ways - BS&T was once called "a swaggering brass experiment", and the BBB is going the same way except that Paul calls it blues.

"See, like blues to me is a pretty wide range," says Butterfield. "Stuff like - Roland Kirk plays the blues, Nina Simone sings the blues, Ray Charles, Aretha, Muddy Waters, Little Milton... I mean, there's so much difference. Some people say that there's certain kind of changes with the blues, and some say it has to be like Muddy or John Lee Hooker to be blues, and some people say you have to have certain instrumentation for the blues... and it's all bullshit. Complete bullshit. Blues to me is any kind of music that has a heavy feeling. The word means as much as saying 'greens' or 'reds', you know..."

Butterfield has developed into something of an acquired taste - much more so than in those early heady days. The material is now less instantly appealing - not surprising, considering the tracks on the new album are originals, and on the first Elmore James, Muddy Waters, Willie Dixon and Little Walter were among the writers - but the band still has the "heavy feeling", but without the tremendous guitar/harp domination, which punctuated and typified their early sound.

Unlike many albums, the first track on 'Keep on Moving' is without doubt the worst, so if you're interested in buying, don't play it as a sampler - I've seen it described as 'like a barely rejected song from 'Hair'' and that's about right. But much

better things permeate the record thereafter and glimpses of Buzzy Feiten, the latest brilliant string king, fuzz-boxing through the horns, show that the successor to Bloomfield and Bishop is no amateur. I'm not sure that Paul's voice projects in quite the way it did - on 'Losing Hand' the vocal is fairly routine, but a beautiful low register harp solo reminds us of where he used to be at.

From the slow beginning to the faster chorus, 'Except You' is reminiscent of 'You made me so very happy'... guitar chortling away beneath the riff symphony - a really excellent cut. Then the title track - perhaps another lump of autobiography, because Butterfield has kept on moving through times when he was leader in a new exciting field, to the times when his inspiration seemed to die, and back to excellence and promise with a band of almost unknowns.

If you're a Butterfield freak, you should buy this - if you're not, you should start a collection, but with the first two albums; miss out the next

two, and come in again with 'Keep On Moving'.

Without wishing to enter the realms of controversy, it should be remembered that Butterfield led what was probably the first fully integrated rock band. He is still leading an integrated band, and perhaps we should let Michael Bloomfield have the final word on his one time boss: "Butterfield is something else. There's no white bullshit with him. It wouldn't matter if he were green, a planaria, a tuna fish sandwich... Butterfield would still be into blues."

John.

The centrefold shows the present Butterfield Blues Band, and the photo accompanying this article - taken by Rick Sullo of Broadside Magazine - shows the original band playing at Newport in Summer '65. The members are, left to right, Jerome Arnold, Paul Butterfield, Sam Lay, Elvin Bishop, and Mike Bloomfield. Organist Mark Naftalin is hidden from view.



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Zigzag will help and advise anyone on booking groups. Phone John at 0BR3 36742.

Thanks everyone for 1969....God bless you all....Happy New Year.....Love and peace....Jerry Floyd.

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JERRY FLOYD

(noted DJ and journalist)



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PROMOTERS, AGENTS & MANAGERS

We thought it might be interesting to run a series in which promoters, agents and managers talk about the business from their point of view, and this month we start with Barry Murray of the Red Bus Company.

NO. ONE: RED BUS



All Red Bus is really about is the realisation that everything in this business is inter-related - publishing, recording, promoting, managing, agency work in general - and the idea is to put all those things under one roof so one can do it properly and liaises smoothly. So when you have a band, you can give it the service that it needs to have. If you've got it that tight, you should be able to move 3 or 4 bands in a couple of years, and give them decent service in a scene that is becoming increasingly competitive.

Red Bus is a collection of people experienced in the business - so if you combine that experience, the theory of an inter-related company, some work and some fair wind, things should happen.

We have one simple criterion musically, and that is whether or not it's good. If you talk about soul music being a drag but heavy rock as being good... that's completely biased and invalid, because there's a lot of soul music which is funky and groovy, and worth listening to, and there's a lot of rock music worth listening to; but there's a lot of bad soul music and a lot of bad rock music. If it's good, people can turn on to it - I mean, you've got to be some sort of a Philistine if you say that only certain forms of music are acceptable to you... your ears tell you that you've got to be receptive to all sounds.

On that premise, we have several soul bands on our books, who work hard and well, and provide the basic earning power necessary to the company. But at the same time, they are expanding; getting out of the straight, imitative soul things, becoming adventurous in their own right, and I'd say that this is a signpost... this is the way it will go with soul bands. They're going to get into different things - I mean, when you find soul bands digging Creedence Clearwater or the Floyd, you know it's going to rub off somewhere.

The big drag thing about this business is categorisation... people don't want to think. As long as they can classify something, it's easy. "I dig that because it's so and so". If we aren't snobbish and try to be receptive to all music, making

excellence the criterion, then the whole music scene would benefit... it must do.

We intend to promote our bands heavily for 2 reasons; 1. We want to perpetuate the type of music we dig, and 2. We want to be able to give exposure to as many bands as we can. I know there's a profit motive, but that doesn't dictate why we're doing it. We've just opened a club called the Temple at 33/37 Wardour Street, and we're trying to give exposure to new bands, which we think will happen in 1970 or 1971. It could work: I mean, we've had some bands on who nobody had ever heard before, and they were bloody good. Our policy is also to get away from the plasticity in the current promotional scene - where people are charging hype prices for hype bands. The important thing is musical content and value for money... we're charging 12/6 at the moment for an all nighter with 4 or 5 bands, good sounds, lights, films, food and drink facilities. And we hope that people will agree that they're getting value, and will turn on to some new sounds - not the same old things. We're going to run 5 nights a week from around the middle of January - we want to cover a variety of musical tastes - folk, jazz, etc. and we want to provide a social service in effect. Ideally, it'll be a cross between an arts lab and a venue, incorporating the best aspects of each under one roof.

Nothing is constant on the musical scene. A lot of the bands that are down right wow, and there are some who are right down, we want to try and give a leg up. It will do them good, do the scene good, and that's what the Temple is about. And ultimately, we hope to open Temples around the country, and try to introduce a little more freedom of choice. At the moment, too many people are telling people what to buy, what to hear, what to see. The hypens and hustlers have ruled the roost for about the last year and half, which is such a drag - and I want to give small bands a chance to be seen a couple of times, without their being got at by the business heavies.

I think that we've picked up on the John Peel campaign, like a lot of people have. He gets to see a lot of bands and he tries to put it about that there are a lot of good new bands around, in the hope that they get a chance.

Our efforts are working in some ways. We've found a few acts which are really good; for instance, Trader Horne, which is Judy Dyble from the original Fairport Convention, and Jackie MacAuley from Them. They are a gas. Jackie is certainly going to emerge as a major writer in 1970, because not only has he got invention but he's got melodic flair. Then there's Titus Groan, who are a splinter group from Jerome Arnold's Blues Band, and they are into some nice things, and the Grope, who are a sort of weird Scottish group, and they are interesting in a funny/violent kind of way.

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THE YEAR'S RECORDS

Instead of re-digesting the decade or last year in any retrospective pieces, we decided to get some of the people who are connected with, or have written for, the magazine to pick out their 5 favourite albums of 1969. They are chosen for the personal pleasure they provided rather than their technical excellence or musical brilliance, and they are in no particular order.

JERRY FLOYD (DJ and man at large)
Out Here - Love (Blue Thumb import)
Quintessence (Island)
Cloud Nine - Temptations (Tamla)
Your Saving Grace - Steve Miller Band (Capitol import)
Joy Of A Toy - Kevin Ayers (Harvest)

ALAN LORD (Contributor)
Happy Trails - Quicksilver Messenger Service (Capitol)
Live Dead - Grateful Dead (Warner Bros import)
The Charlatans (Philips)
Elephant Mountain - Youngbloods (RCA)
Copperfield - Dillards (Elektra import)

IAN (Wanderer and co-editor)
Nashville Skyline - Bob Dylan (CBS)
Abbey Road - Beatles (Apple)
Farewell Aldebaran - Judy Henske & Jerry Yester (Straight)
Your Saving Grace - Steve Miller (Capitol import)
Astral Weeks - Van Morrison (Warner Brothers)

ROD (Roadie and sometime photographer)
Crosby Stills and Nash (Atlantic)
Stand Up - Jethro Tull (Island)
What we did on our holidays - Fairport Convention (Island)
With a little help from my friends - Joe Cocker (Regal Zonophone)
Abbey Road - Beatles (Apple)

JOHN (ad hustler & press reception frequenter)
Tommy - The Who (Track)
Soft Parade - The Doors (Elektra)
Blues Obituary - Groundhogs (Liberty)
With a little help - Joe Cocker (Regal Zonophone)
Green River - Creedence Clearwater (Liberty)

DAVE STOPPS (advertiser & Friar)
If only for a moment - Blossom Toes (Marmalade)
Let It bleed - Rolling Stones (Decca)
Rare Bird (Charisma)
The Band (Capitol)
The things I notice now - Tom Paxton (Elektra)

DICK LAWSON (ex writer, now with Friends)
Your Saving Grace - Steve Miller (Capitol import)
Expressway to your heart - Buddy Miles (Mercury)
Hot Rats - Frank Zappa (Bizarre)
CTA - Chicago (CBS)
Yellow Submarine - Beatles (Parlophone)
(He's cheating - this was released in 1968, but he insists on its inclusion because "It's all too much" is his favourite track of all time.)

ANDY DUNKLEY (DJ and sporadic contributor)
Crosby Stills & Nash (Atlantic)
Your Saving Grace - Steve Miller (Capitol import)
Mott the Hoople (Island)
Four Sail - Love (Elektra)
CTA - Chicago (CBS)

PETE (starving editor)
What we did on our holidays - Fairport Convention (Island)
Astral Weeks - Van Morrison (Warner Brothers)
Leige and Lelf - Fairport Convention (Island)
Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere - Neil Young (Reprise)
Joe Cocker! (Regal Zonophone)

Now, isn't all that fascinating?

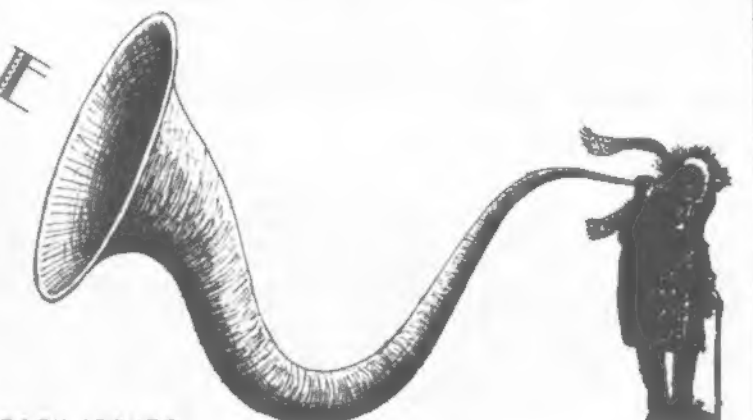
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ZIGZAG WANDERINGS



There you go - it's 1970 already - so we start the year off in amazing fashion by being two weeks late. Anyway, a happy new year to everybody, and thanks for all the cards, greetings and good wishes.

As you will have seen, the dreaded Love article is still not included. It arrived from America, but in my editorial capacity (Pow!) I deemed it too obscure for publication - I don't think that English readers could follow it - I certainly can't. Anyway, we're soliciting an Arthur Lee article from another



source, but experience has taught me not to make any rash promises as to publication dates.

What's happening? Lots of things - like the Canned Heat tour, which should be a gas. We saw them last time and they were really too much. Also, one of our ace college floggers, Steve Allison, is co-ordinating a concert for Cardiff Arts Project Centre, to happen at Sophia Gardens on Feb. 5th. They hope to have the Floyd, Daddy Long Legs, Marsupilami, Tea & Symphony, Black Sabbath and a load more.

We're very behind with letter answering - but they'll all get done eventually, so don't worry about cheques and postal orders having gone astray. All these Christmas festivities have taken their toll - and we're also moving out to an even remoter outpost as soon as we can sell this place. (Know any fool who wants to buy a dilapidated madhouse directly under the flight path of Luton Airport?)

It's all happening in Bristol, folks. A label called "Village Thing" is starting - and they've

already got 8 track studios down there. First releases will be around Easter.

Here's a fascinating story. In Zigzag 7, Middle Earth booked 2 pages of advertising. Copy date arrived and the ads had not turned up, so we phoned. "Can you come and get them?" Off we go - only to find that nothing is ready except some pages of copy and some photos. "Can you type it all up and get it into some sort of orderly shape?" We do so. Then a few weeks later, Middle Earth have an ad in Melody Maker with various testimonials as to the worth of their product. Included are snippets of their Zigzag advert, with it looking as if they were editorial praises of their records. To put it mildly, it made us a trifle angry - using our name to hype their stuff. Not only did we not give any opinion about any of their records, we haven't even heard any of them. Don't bother.

The most disgusting display of the year? Dave Clark Five cocking up Cat Mother's song on television. Just what is the Musicians Union ruling on miming? Do they waive it if you can prove that you're completely incompetent musicians?

Going to London is something I don't like doing. It's a nauseous jungle for the most part, and being unable to find somewhere to park is just about the only thing that ever annoys me. But I did go down to the opening of "Something" in Tottenham Court Road, just for old times sake. It's held in the same basement as UFO was, and was pretty packed. I took Rainer Blome, editor of the German "Sounds" magazine - and he was delighted by the entire spectacle.

If you read and enjoyed the Sun Story in the latest Oz, you'll find a book called "The Sun Legend" of interest. You can get it by sending 7/6 to the author, Paul Vernon, 172 Cricklewood Lane, NW2.

Joe Cocker - now there's a very nice cat - was enthusing about Leon Russell's new album. This should be released around Easter by Shelter Records a new label formed by Russell and Denny Cordell and distributed by Blue Thumb. On the record are Chris Stainton, Eric Clapton, Ringo Starr and George Harrison. Should be a gas. By the way - if you ever go and see Joe Cocker - go by tractor.

Take it easy.

BOXES R. CRUMB



Yellow Dog

OTIS RUSH

For a good many years the recordings of Otis Rush made for the small Chicago-based COBRA label have been sought after by collectors around the world.

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"All Your Love (I Miss Loving)"; "Double Trouble"; "She's A Good'Un"; "I Can't Quit You Baby" are just four of the nineteen titles included.

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